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FAIRY STORIES
AND
WONDER TALES



"ROBERT, WORN OUT WITH THE TOIL OF THE DAY, SAT WITH HIS CAT ON HIS LAP."

FAIRY STORIES

AND

WONDER TALES

BY

DR. THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH ✓

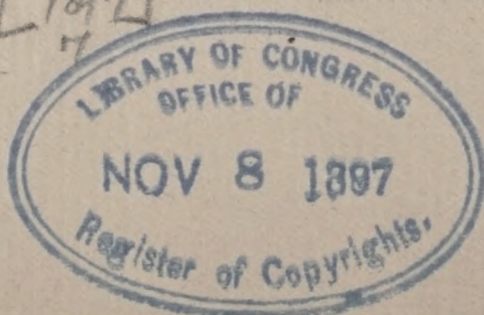
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ELIZABETH S. TUCKER

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PREFACE.

The author of the following Fairy Stories and Wonder Tales has long been known throughout the world as the writer of a much admired song of half a century ago, as well as the author of poems of far greater merit, and as novelist, playwright and journalist. The tales in this volume, gathered up with his consent from various periodical publications, represent but a small part of Dr. English's contribution to Child Literature, and testify to his success in this department and to the wholesomeness of his writings for the young.

If the impression made upon my own mind by reading these stories as they first appeared in print, be any criterion of the manner in which they were received by others, my desire to have them collected and published in this volume needs no other explanation. That some of them have been translated into other languages is perhaps further evidence of the interest awakened by them in their original form and that they are deserving of the permanence now given them.

Preface.

To the publishers of the various periodicals in which these tales first reached the public, and who have so courteously consented to this present use of them, and especially to Messrs. Harper & Brothers, The Century Company and *The New York Independent*, I hereby make my most grateful acknowledgments.

FLORENCE ENGLISH NOLL.

To the Memory
of
MY MOTHER
ANNIE MAXWELL ENGLISH

(June 17th, 1888)

whose approval these tales had won
in their earlier form
this volume is affectionately dedicated

F. E. N.

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FAIRY TALES.

I.

Pambookat.

ONCE upon a time there lived on the banks of the Asahan, a river of Sumatra, a young fisherman whose name was Pambookat. The parents of Pambookat died before he arrived at the age of manhood, and had bequeathed to their son a cottage, a rood of ground, a net, and a small boat. The young man, who was of an industrious habit and cheerful disposition, alternately cultivated his ground and fished with his net, and so managed to obtain a tolerable livelihood. Thus he lived for several months after his parents' death, and thus he would have continued to live, doubtless, had not a near neighbour, whose name was Risau, cast an eye of longing on his little

possessions. Risau was wealthy, but covetous, and having many servants ready to obey his commands, came one day, while poor Pambookat was absent upon the river, pulled down his cabin, destroyed his fences, burned the greater part of his rude furniture and uprooted every plant in his garden. When the fisherman returned at night, and saw the desolation which had been spread during his absence, he was sorely grieved. But what could he do? A pitying neighbour told him who had been the aggressor, and Pambookat felt that in a contest with an antagonist so powerful he could obtain no redress. So he gathered together what little remnant of property had escaped the notice of the spoiler, placed it in his boat, and sailed down the river he knew not wither. In about half an hour's time he arrived at the mouth of the stream, and fastening his boat to the projecting roots of a tree that protruded from the bank, he drew his cloak around him, covered himself with the sail, and went to sleep.

It was broad day when Pambookat awoke. The sun was shining brightly, and the breeze

was setting in from the sea. He sat up and reflected on his situation. Suddenly he heard a twittering noise, and, looking up, beheld a white bird, in shape like a dove, with scarlet feet and a blue bill, which was apparently tied to a bough overhead. The bird was evidently in pain, and the heart of Pambookat was moved to pity. With much difficulty he managed to climb the tree and release the bird, which immediately flew away. This done, he descended and put out to sea, where he made several casts with his net. Fortune favoured him, and he caught a goodly number of fine fish. These he took to a village not far from the mouth of the river, and there sold. By this means he obtained his breakfast, and was enabled to hire an apartment in the cottage of an old man named Bareeda. Here he dwelt for several months, and by industry and frugality managed somewhat to mend his fortune.

One evening, as he was returning from his daily labour with his net on his shoulder, he met with a beautiful lady, who called him by name. Seeing by her manner and dress that

she was of high rank, Pambookat bowed, and awaited her commands.

“Pambookat!” said the lady, “you once did me a service, though you know it not, and I am come to repay you. The bird tied to a bough on the bank of the Asahan was myself. I am a fairy, and my name is Pundapatan. My bitter enemy, Gurgasi, a goblin of great power, had overcome me, and succeeded in changing me to a bird, in which condition I was to remain until I should be released by our good queen, Salidk. Though we fairies in our own condition do not suffer death, yet we partake of the condition of the animals into which we change ourselves, or are changed by others. Had I died in such a state, being deprived of my immortality, I should have been utterly annihilated. To secure such a catastrophe, Gurgasi fastened me to the bough of a tree, intending that I should starve to death. There it was that you first saw me. Your heart was touched with pity at my forlorn condition and you released me. I know of your distresses, occasioned by the wickedness of Risau. I am here expressly to

serve you. Take this iron ring which will just fit your finger. Travel from here to the great kingdom of Zanguebar, in order to seek your fortune. When you need me rub that ring, utter the word 'Keraña!' and I will at once place myself at your command. Do not fear to ask me any favour when I appear, however apparently impossible."

After these words the fairy vanished; and Pambookat, after musing a few moments upon the extraordinary communication he had just received, made his way to the house.

The next day the young man, having determined to heed the counsel of the fairy, sold his boat and net, and took passage in a proa which was bound for Zanguebar. He arrived at the chief city of that kingdom on the seventh day, and took lodgings at the house of a loquacious old fellow by the name of Petak. From his host he learned that the Princess Elok, who was the eldest daughter of the King, was soon to be married to Prince Moodah, the only son and heir of Mulya the Magnificent, who reigned over the kingdom of Yemen. The old man told him farther

that the goblin Gurgasi had desired her hand, but that King Kochak, who was surnamed the Arrogant, had spurned his suit with disdain. On this account the goblin, with an apparently whimsical malice, had carried off every tailor and seamstress in the kingdom. At first this was laughed at by all but the immediate friends and relatives of the abducted people as a very silly sort of revenge ; but as its reason became gradually apparent, men ceased even to smile. In truth, the robbery, at that juncture, became a matter of serious annoyance. It was necessary to provide the Princess and her large array of bridesmaids with new and appropriate robes ; and the King, in order to add effect to her marriage festivities, desired to reclothe his entire army. Then the courtiers and wealthy citizens were anxious to display new and costly dresses in honour of the joyful occasion. All this was now impossible, and the beggarly appearance of the court and people, with their old and shabby dresses, would be a source of amusement to the well-dressed lords who were expected in the train of the bridegroom.

Pambookat listened attentively to the account, and then asked what would be done for him who would extricate the King from his dilemma, and the kingdom from the impending mortification.

“Without doubt,” replied the old man, “the King would reward him greatly, and he would become the chief subject of the kingdom. But it is scarcely possible, unless Gurgasi speedily relents, to make over two hundred thousand new dresses in the course of one month, at the end of which time the Prince will arrive. It has been proposed to offer the young and beautiful princess, Manjalis, the sister of Elok, to the goblin as a wife; but she has beseeched her father not to give her up to Gurgasi, who has but one eye, and that on the top of his forehead—has a long, thin nose, shaped like a radish—and is still more disfigured by two fangs which grow out of his under jaw and curl upward.”

“Is the Princess Manjalis so handsome, then?” inquired Pambookat.

“She is as beautiful as a lily in the water,” was the reply; “and so amiable that she is

beloved by all her attendants, who almost worship her."

"I should like to see this wonderful beauty," said Pambookat.

"Nothing more easy," replied Petak. "Although I am an ordinary subject of the King, yet my sister, who is bedridden in the house, was the nurse of the Princess, who visits her weekly. To-morrow is her day for coming. Remain at home, and I will pass you off as my bond-servant. She always lays aside her veil during her visits, and you will have an opportunity to behold her. But if she ask you any questions, remember to answer that you are my slave, lest otherwise you get both yourself and me into serious difficulty."

Pambookat remained at home on the following day, and the Princess came as the old man had said. When she saw Pambookat she would have retained her veil, but learning that the young man was one of the household, she removed it. Pambookat was struck with her beauty, and quite bewildered with the excess of her charms. Manjalis entered

into conversation with the old man, and displayed so much wit and sense that she completed the conquest already begun. She seemed no less struck by the manner and appearance of the supposed slave, and entered into conversation with him, asking him numerous questions concerning his native place, his age, and how he came into such a condition, to all of which he answered so as to confirm the representations of Petak. She soon began to conceive a warm affection for him, but, after the manner of a prudent young maiden, endeavoured to conceal it. Afterward she visited her nurse's chamber, where she remained during some time, and then departed, leaving Pambookat dissatisfied with a condition which interposed barriers between him and the object of his love.

Every week the visit was repeated, and on the day when the Princess was expected Pambookat remained at home. Thus passed away three weeks. On the fourth time that he met her the young fisherman observed that the Princess wore a very sad countenance, and ventured to inquire if she were ill,

"No, good Pambookat," answered the Princess, with a sad smile. "I am well enough, but I share the chagrin which my father and the whole Court feel, as they reflect on the forlorn appearance they will make at the coming nuptials of my sister with Prince Moodah; and I am sad for myself, since they propose to summon that hateful goblin, Gurgasi, and to bribe him with my hand to return all those people whom he now keeps imprisoned in a great cavern of Mount Caucasus. If he accede, how shall I resist? Have I not cause for sadness at a prospect so fearful?"

"And what would you do for the man who would save you from your threatened disaster?" inquired Pambookat.

"I would give him any thing in my power to bestow," answered the Princess.

"Even if I were he?" questioned the young man.

Manjalis flushed, and quickly dropped her veil. "You are only a slave," she replied; "and the King, my father, would never consent."

"But if he did?" persisted Pambookat.



“MANJALIS, PLUCKING A ROSEBUD FROM A VASE, DROPPED IT
AT HIS FEET.”

Manjalis said nothing ; but plucking a rose-bud from a vase which stood by, dropped it at his feet, and, turning, sought the apartment of her old nurse. When she came out she looked anxiously around the apartment, but Pambookat was gone.

The next morning, at a public audience given by the King, there appeared a young man in humble dress who desired to have an interview with his Majesty, apart from all others. Kochak looked amazed at the bold request, and scrutinised the applicant closely. But as he saw nothing sinister in the aspect of Pambookat—for it was he who made the demand—he consented. When the *pungadupan*, or presence-chamber, was cleared of all but the guard, who remained at the extremity of the apartment, the monarch commanded the other to speak.

“O King!” said Pambookat, prostrating himself on the *purmadani*, or carpet, which was in front of the throne, “I propose, with your royal permission, to prepare all the new clothing required by your royal daughters and their attendants, your army, your courtiers,

and your chief citizens, before the arrival of Prince Moodah."

"Well," said the King, laughing, "this is a modest proposition truly."

"On my head be it," was the reply. "If I fail, let my life be forfeited. If I succeed—"

"You can name your own reward," interrupted Kochak; "but the proposition is preposterous. There is but a week's time, and all the tailors and seamstresses of which Gurgasi has deprived me could not now effect it. If I seek to obtain them back, it is only to deliver them from their sad condition, and to furnish my daughters and their immediate attendants with new robes. More than that is now impossible."

"Nevertheless, O King!" persisted Pambookat, "let me at least make the trial."

"So be it," said the King. "An apartment shall be assigned you in the palace; all the materials you require shall be furnished, and a thousand slaves, if you need them, placed at your disposal. But if you succeed, you are certainly the most wonderful of all tailors."

"May it please the King," replied Pambookat, "I am no tailor, but a fisherman."

"Worse and worse," said the monarch. "I give you leave to withdraw your proposition. You had better consider well, for if you undertake the matter and fail, you shall lose your head."

"I shall consult a friend, and answer your Majesty to-morrow," said Pambookat, and left the audience.

That night he summoned the fairy, and desired her to release the workmen from the thrall of the goblin.

"What you ask," replied the fairy, "is beyond my power ; but I can serve you as well by providing you with workmen and work-women better than those abducted."

So the fairy instructed him what he must do.

The next day, Pambookat having adhered to his proposition, the large audience hall at the palace, which was a hundred *gāzās* broad, and a hundred and fifty long, was filled at one extremity with silks, laces, velvets, and muslins. At the other end were the King and royal family, attended by the eunuchs of the

puradiän, the guards, and the principal officers of the Court.

“I shall show you, O King!” said Pambookat, “that the malice of Gurgasi is idle; for the fairy who is my friend has promised that the work required shall be done in time, and that your Majesty shall see it in progress.”

“She promises well,” said Kochak, stroking his *chumbang* as he spoke. “Let us see her perform.”

Pambookat advanced into the centre of the room, and said, as he rubbed the ring on his finger, “Keraña!”

At the word there was a faint whirring noise, the floor of the palace opened, and the fairy Pundapatan arose, and made her obeisance to the King, who trembled, for he saw she was one of the *chundra*, or immortals.

Pundapatan waved her wand thrice, and stamped on the floor, when there arose ten square boxes made of *kayu-boodi*, or wisdom-wood, and each beautifully polished. She tapped each box with her wand, when they sunk again, but left in their stead ten young

women with beautiful features, but pale of face and delicate of frame.

“O sisters of the needle!” said the fairy, “obey her who called you to being, you and all your sisters of the needle!”

“To hear is to obey!” was the answer. Then the ten sisters stamped upon the floor, and before each of them arose ten black goblins, each of whom had one arm of iron and one of silver, and the silver arm had a needle in its fingers. Singular to say, the needle bore its thread near the point instead of at the head, and was fed from a great roll of thread on the goblin’s shoulder. Each of the young women suddenly seized silk, velvet, or muslin, as happened to come the nearest, and cutting it the required shape, gave it to one of the goblins, and so continued to do. The goblins began to sew with the rapidity of lightning, and garment after garment was completed to the great wonder of the spectators. Still the work went on, long after the King and the Court had retired—robe, gown, baju, sikapan, kabayu, jubah, and sacotar accumulated in high piles; and thousands of

slaves were kept busy, hour after hour, in removing these and distributing them among those for whom they were destined.

At length the nuptial-day arrived—all the required garments had been provided—and when the Prince Moodah arrived, and rode into the city with his train, his followers wondered at the splendid dresses of the people, and declared that so much costly and elegant apparel had never before been seen, not even at the Court of Mulya the Magnificent.

When the nuptials were over King Kochak sent for Pambookat, and after presenting him with the most splendid robe wrought by the goblins, and girding a costly *padang*, or sword, to his side, caused the royal *bundara*, or treasurer, to pay him a thousand pieces of gold, and asked him to name any reward he chose for his great service.

“O King, live forever!” said Pambookat, prostrating himself on the *purmadani*. “I ask the hand of your second daughter, the Princess Manjalis.”

“Truly,” replied the King, “my word is pledged, and shall be kept. But you had bet-

ter demand her younger sister, for it is an ancient law of the realm that he who marries the first or second daughter of the King, unless he be a king or a king's son, shall be put to death upon the day of his nuptials, and I will not repeal the law."

Pambookat departed to his home in great grief, and summoned the fairy. She bade him go to the kingdom of Yemen, which would further his happiness, and with those words she vanished.

The young man prepared at once for his departure, and engaged passage with one Bajag, who passed for an honest trader, but whose vessel was in reality a piratical proa, and himself a leader of a band of *orang-laut*, or pirates, who made descents upon the neighbouring coasts and carried off much booty. As Pambookat had no choice, there being but the one vessel on the coast, he contracted with Bajag, who agreed, in return for ten pieces of gold, to convey him to the chief sea-port of Yemen.

The night before his departure he walked out and stood before the King's palace.

While there he heard a voice singing in an upper chamber, and knew it to be that of the Princess. The words of the *pantung*, or quatrain, that she sung, showed him that she was aware of his presence. They were these :

“ If first you go, then seek for me
A leaf from the Kamboja-tree ;
If first you die, then patient wait
For me at Paradise's gate.”

The lattice opened when the song ceased, and a package fell at the feet of Pambookat. He opened it. There were inclosed a cinder and a feather, bound together with hair, which meant, in the language of lovers, “ I burn for you. Take me, and fly.” He took up a twig lying near and thrust it in the ground, signifying that she should wait and remain faithful, and then, after kissing his hand to her, departed.

The next morning Pambookat embarked with Bajag, and after ten days' sail arrived at the chief city of Yemen, where, in the character of a young man travelling for pleasure, he took lodgings at the house of an old man named Kullunggara.

The host of Pambookat was very curious and inquisitive concerning the origin of his guest, but the young man prudently kept his own counsel. Finding that he could learn nothing by direct queries, the old man then began to tell something : the next pleasure, after receiving information, being that of imparting it to others. Among other matters he mentioned that Galak the Ferocious, who reigned over the kingdom of Sind, had rebelled against King Mulya, to whom he had been tributary, and that the latter had been unable thus far to reduce his former vassal to subjection.

“But,” said Pambookat, “I had always heard that Mulya was one of the most powerful of monarchs. Has he not experienced generals, and a large army, and can he not overcome a country like Sind?”

“Nature fights for Galak,” replied the other. “For between Yemen and Sind there lies a frightful desert which is a seven-days’ journey in width. It is covered with a pestilential vapour, and those who are exposed to it more than twenty-four hours become so weakened

and diseased that the greater part die at the close of their journey. So it has chanced that, of the armies that have gone there, but few survived at the end of the march, and those so weak that the troops of Galak easily overcame them."

"The King would doubtless well reward the man who could take an army safely to Sind?" said Pambookat.

"He has offered," replied the host, "to give the conquerer the throne of Sind, and to release him from all tribute. But now that four armies have been destroyed no one will venture."

"I could overcome Galak easily," said Pambookat.

Kulunggara was so overjoyed at having something to tell, that he forthwith repeated the remark of his lodger at the nearest *rumah-kahwah*, or coffee-house, from whence it travelled from mouth to mouth until it finally reached the King.

The next day after the arrival of Pambookat, a *pukkiriman*, or messenger, was sent to command the presence of the stranger

in the royal palace. Pambookat thereupon arrayed himself in his robe of honour, thrust his sword in his belt, and set out to the palace of Mulya, where the *pungawals*, or guards, at once conducted him to the King, who was seated on his throne, surrounded by his viziers and the officers of the Court. After the customary prostrations, Pambookat confessed, in reply to the question of the King, that he had made the remark attributed to him.

“Were I to take you at your word,” said Mulya, “what security have I that the army which I might place at your orders would reach Sind in safety?”

“That is only to be seen by the event,” replied Pambookat.

The King and his viziers conferred together, and at length Bijak, the chief vizier, spoke.

“His Majesty is pleased at your audacity,” said he; “but know ye, O stranger! that he who aspires to combat with an enemy should give some token of courage and wisdom.”

“It is just, O Vizier!” replied Pambookat, “and I am ready to prove both.”

Now there had been brought, the day before, from the forest where he had been captured, a huge tiger, who was then in a cage of iron in the courtyard of the palace. And Bijak proposed that Pambookat should enter the cage, and confront the brute.

"I accept the task," said Pambookat ; "and I only ask to be first left alone for a moment in a chamber."

This was acceded to, though the courtiers smiled at his confidence, and predicted to each other that he would be speedily torn to pieces and devoured. However, so soon as he was without witnesses, Pambookat summoned the fairy, and told her what he was expected to do. She waved her wand thrice, and stamping her foot there rose a fairy who seemed to be asleep, and who bore in her hand a flask of gold and a sponge, around which was wrapped a clean linen cloth.

"Take these," said the fairy. "As you enter the cage pour the contents of the flask on the sponge, wrap the cloth loosely around it, and before the animal can recover from his surprise apply it to his nostrils. He will be-

come powerless for a few minutes, and you can do with him as you choose."

Having said this, the fairy and her attendant disappeared.

The guards now came and conducted Pambookat to the courtyard, where all the Court had assembled. Pambookat entered the cage, and the tiger, astounded at his audacity, crouched for a moment in a corner, growling and lashing his sides with his tail; then he prepared to spring upon his prey. The young man followed the fairy's instructions, and, just as the tiger was in the act of springing, thrust the sponge against the expanded nostrils of the brute. In an instant the limbs of the tiger relaxed, his eyes closed, and he lay motionless on the ground. Pambookat opened and shut the tiger's jaws, thrust his hand between his teeth, and finally, seizing him by the tail, dragged him half way across the cage. Drawing his kris, he cut off the tip of the brute's right ear, and then, tying first his scarf around his fore legs, left the cage, and bowed to the King, who had looked on with astonishment.

"Doubtless," said Pambookat, "none in your Majesty's Court are inferior to me in boldness. Possibly, therefore, some one of the courtiers will return the tiger this piece of his ear, and ask him for my scarf in exchange."

But the tiger had now recovered, and was growling so furiously with pain and rage, that no one offered to comply with the request.

"The courage of the stranger is undoubted," said Bijak; "but to command in the field or to rule a conquered nation requires wisdom as well as boldness. We have sent a messenger a journey of forty leagues, and he has not yet returned. We would know if he has reached the Court of Bayik the Good, and if the Queen, who is the sister of our sovereign, has recovered from her illness."

"It is but a trifle to know," answered the other. "Conduct me to the chamber, and leave me there alone for an hour."

So they sent him as he desired; and when they had left him he summoned the fairy again, and told her of the vizier's task. She waved her wand and stamped her foot as be-

fore, and this time there arose a goblin whose face was dark and terrible, and whose eyes threw out occasionally flashes of light.

“ O Kilat, son of the cloud ! ” said the fairy, “ tell me what I want to know, you and your brethren, the sons of the cloud.”

“ To hear is to obey,” answered Kilat ; and clapping his hands there entered others like him. One of them bore a curious magical instrument, which he placed upon a table ; the other, applying his hands to his navel, began drawing out a slender line. Attaching the end of this to the machine he darted out of the window, all the while spinning out the line from his bowels, as a spider spins her web. He was out of sight in a moment, but his track through the air could be traced for a long way by flashes of lightning which he left behind him in his rapid flight. Pambookat had hardly time to count a hundred before the magical instrument began to click. Kilat bent his head down as though he were listening to what it said. Then he spoke :

“ Tell his Glorious and Excellent Majesty, Lord of the Earth and Water, Lord of the

White Elephant, Lord of the Celestial Weapon, Lord of Life, and Great Chief of Righteousness, the messenger has arrived, and sends tidings. The Queen has recovered from her illness ; the King has been victorious ; the treasure will be sent. The messenger sent two days ago to his Exalted Highness is now entering the city gates, and will reach the palace in a quarter of an hour."

The fairy and the goblins disappeared, and Pambookat sought the King, to whom he communicated the tidings of Kilat. Just after he had finished, the missing messenger rode up, and the letter he bore confirmed what Pambookat had said. The King thereupon gave orders that an army should be assembled and placed under the command of the young stranger.

Pambookat returned to his lodgings to prepare for his departure, and there summoned the fairy once more, and consulted her as to the mode of transporting his troops speedily over the desert. Waving her wand thrice, the fairy again stamped her foot, and this time there arose a hideous djinn, of colossal

stature, with muscles of iron and brass ; and his eyes, mouth, and nostrils gave forth smoke and sparks of fire.

“Api-gwloojoo,” said the fairy, “you are welcome ! I command you to serve my friend here—you, the creature of my will ; you and your brethren, the eaters of fire.”

“To hear is to obey,” answered the djinn. “What must I do ?”

“Prepare to convey a hundred thousand armed men to the chief city of Sind in three hours.”

The djinn bowed and vanished ; and the fairy, after bidding Pambookat collect his army in front of the King’s palace on the following morning, disappeared.

The next day, at dawn, the army of the King, a hundred thousand strong, were all assembled in front of the palace, where they found all the people of the city gathered, and all in a state of excited surprise. For during the night thousands of djinni had come and built an iron road extending far into the desert beyond the reach of the eye ; and on that road, harnessed to great chariots that

were capable of holding a thousand men each, were a hundred horses with bodies and limbs of iron and brass, and nostrils breathing fire and smoke. Pambookat ordered the army to enter the chariots, whereupon the horses each gave a scream that chilled the blood of those who heard it, and with a snort and puff they all dashed along the iron road with the speed of lightning, and were soon out of sight, leaving the multitude wondering at the extraordinary spectacle. On sped the horses dragging the chariots behind, and in the space of three hours the troops were all set down in the chief city of Sind.

Galak was taken unawares, but he made a bold stand. His small army, however, was soon cut to pieces or dispersed, and he was taken by his own people, who loathed him, and put to death. Pambookat was proclaimed King, and the edict of Mulya the Magnificent, recognizing the new monarch as an independent sovereign, was read to the people amidst great rejoicing.

But Pambookat found the affairs of the kingdom in bad order. The taxes were op-

pressive ; wicked men were in office ; and, to crown all, the crops, although heavy, were rotting in the fields, because Galak had drawn so many men to his army that there were few to labour. To lower the taxes was easy ; and after some trouble good men were found to take the place of those who plundered alike the government and the people, but the scarcity of reapers was not so easily remedied. In this dilemma Pambookat bethought him of the fairy, whom he summoned once more, and confided to her his difficulty.

At the waving of the wand of Pundapatan and the stamping of her foot there speedily arose a djinn, of a prodigious size, whose wide mouth was armed with long steel teeth, which passed each other in a fearful manner.

“O son of the sickle !” said the fairy, “obey her who called you into being, and reap me all these fields of corn, you and your brethren, the sons of the sickle !”

“To hear is to obey,” answered Orungtuwai, for such was the name of the djinn ; and he stamped his foot, when there arose hundreds of djinni like himself. To and fro

they ran through the fields, falling upon the standing corn, and cutting it with their iron teeth, and binding it in sheaves ready to be gathered into the barns and granaries ; which when the people saw they speedily made haste to store it ready for use. Having done all this the djinni disappeared.

The fame of these exploits of Pambookat was spread far and wide. All the monarchs of the East sought his alliance and favour. The King of Pegu sent to him a wonderful White Elephant. He was ten cubits high, as white as snow. He wore upon his forehead a golden plate, upon which were engraved his name and titles, surrounded with two circles of nine precious stones to guard against all evil influences. His covering was of crimson silk, studded with rubies and diamonds. In his trunk he bore a letter written on a palm-leaf, saying that he was *Senmeng*, the " Lord Elephant, one of the seven precious things, the possession of which marks the *Maha Chakravartti Raja*, the Great Wheel-turning King, the holy and universal sovereign, whose advent marks a new cycle."

But Pambookat sent back the elephant, saying that he was but a mortal, raised to power by celestial favour, and that he must humbly use his power for the good of his subjects and not for conquest or his own glory.

King Pambookat having set all matters in order in his kingdom, set off in the chariots on the iron road for Yemen. From thence he embarked for Zanguebar, where he demanded, evoking, the hand of the Princess Manjalis. The nuptial ceremonies lasted during two weeks, after which he returned with his Queen to the capital of Sind, where the people welcomed him with flowers and fireworks and great rejoicing. Over his kingdom Pambookat reigned long and happily ; and his deeds, and the many great things he effected for the good of his people through the help of Pandupatan, are written in the Chronicles of Sind.

II.

The Axe of Ranier.

ONCE upon a time there lived on the borders of a forest an old woman named Jehanne, who had an only son, a youth of twenty-one years, who was called Ranier. Where the two had originally come from no one knew, but they had lived in their little hut for many years. Ranier was a wood-cutter, and depended on his daily labor for the support of himself and mother, while the latter eked out their scanty means by spinning. The son, although poor, was not without learning, for an old monk in a neighbouring convent had taught him to read and write, and had given him instructions in arithmetic. Ranier was handsome, active and strong, and very much attached to his mother, to whom he paid all the honour and obedience due from a son to a parent.

One morning in Spring Ranier went to his work in the forest with his axe on his shoulder, whistling one of the simple airs of the country as he pursued his way. Striding along beneath the branches of the great oaks and chestnuts, he began to reflect upon the hard fate which seemed to doom him to toil and wretchedness, and, thus thinking, whistled no longer. Presently he sat down upon a moss-covered rock, and laying his axe by his side, let his thoughts shape themselves into words.

“This is a sad life of mine,” said Ranier. “I might better it, perhaps, were I to enlist in the army of the King, where I should at least have food and clothing; but I cannot leave my mother, of whom I am the sole stay and support. Must I always live thus—a poor wood-chopper, earning one day the bread I eat the next, and no more?”

Ranier suddenly felt that some one was near him, and, on looking up, sprang to his feet and removed his cap. Before him stood a beautiful lady, clad in a robe of green satin, with a mantle of crimson velvet on her shoulders, and bearing in her hand a white wand.

"Ranier!" said the unknown, "I am the fairy, Rougevert. I know your history, and have heard your complaint. What gift shall I bestow on you?"

"Beautiful fairy," replied the young man, "I scarcely know what to ask. But I bethink me that my axe is nearly worn out, and I have no money with which to buy another."

The fairy smiled, for she knew that the answer of Ranier came from his embarrassment; and, going to a tree hard by, she tapped on the bark with her wand. Thereupon the tree opened, and she took from a recess in its centre a keen-edged axe with an ashen handle.

"Here," said Rougevert, "is the most excellent axe in the world. With this you can achieve what no wood-chopper has ever done yet. You have only to whisper to yourself what you wish done, and then speak to it properly, and the axe will at once perform all you require, without taxing your strength and with marvellous quickness."

The fairy then taught him the words he should use, and, promising to farther befriend him as he had need, vanished.

Ranier took the axe and went at once to the place where he intended to labour for the day. He was not sure that the axe would do what the giver had promised, but thought it proper to try its powers. "For," he said to himself, "the ranger has given me a hundred trees to fell, for each of which I am to receive a silver groat. To cut these in the usual way would take many days. I will wish the axe to fell and trim them speedily, so,"—he continued aloud, as he had been taught by the fairy—"Axe! axe! chop! chop! and work for my profit!"

Thereupon the axe suddenly leaped from his hands and began to chop with great skill and swiftness. Having soon cut down, trimmed and rolled a hundred trees together, it returned and placed itself in the hands of Ranier.

The wood-chopper was very much delighted with all this, and sat there pleasantly reflecting upon his good fortune in possessing so useful a servant, when the ranger of the forest came along. The latter, who was a great lord, was much surprised when he saw the trees lying there.

"How is this?" asked the ranger, whose name was Woodmount. "At this time yesterday these trees were standing. How did you contrive to fell them so soon?"

"I had assistance, my Lord," replied Ranier; but he said nothing about the magic axe.

Lord Woodmount hereupon entered into conversation with Ranier, and finding him to be intelligent and prompt in his replies, was much pleased with him. At last he said:

"We have had much difficulty in getting ready the timber for the King's new palace, in consequence of the scarcity of wood-cutters and the slowness with which they work. There are over twenty thousand trees yet to be cut and hewn, and for every tree fully finished the King allows a noble of fifty groats, although he gives but a groat for the felling alone. It is necessary that they should all be ready within a month, though I fear that it is impossible. As you seem to be able to get a number of laborers together, I will allot you a thousand trees, if you choose, should you undertake to have them all ready to be hauled away for the builders' use within a month's time."

“My Lord,” answered Ranier, “I will undertake to have the whole twenty thousand ready before the time set.”

“Do you know what you say?” inquired the ranger, astonished at the bold proposal.

“Perfectly, my Lord,” was the reply. “Let me undertake the work on condition that you will cause the forest to be guarded, and no one to enter save they have my written permission. Before the end of the month the trees will be ready.”

“Well,” said Lord Woodmount, “it is a risk for me to run ; but, from what you have done already, it is possible you may obtain enough woodmen to complete your task. Yet, beware ! If you succeed I will not only give you twenty thousand nobles of gold, but also appoint you—if you can write, as you have told me—the deputy ranger here ; and for every day less than a month in which you finish your contract I will add a hundred nobles ; but, if you fail, I will have you hanged on a tree. When shall you begin ?”

“To-morrow morning,” replied Ranier.

The next morning, before daylight, Ranier

took his way to the forest, leaving all his money save three groats with his mother, and, after telling her that he might not return for a day or so, passed the guard that he found already set, and plunged into the wood. When he came to a place where the trees were thickest and loftiest, he whispered to himself what he had to do, and said to the axe: "Axe! axe! chop! chop! and work for my profit." The axe at once went to work with great earnestness, and by nightfall over ten thousand trees were felled, hewn and thrown into piles. Then Ranier, who had not ceased before to watch the work, ate some of the provisions which he had brought with him, and throwing himself under a great tree, whose spreading boughs shaded him from the moonlight, drew his scanty mantle around him, and slept soundly till sunrise.

The next morning Ranier arose and looked with delight at the work already done; then, speaking again to the axe, it began chopping away as before.

Now it chanced that morning that the chief ranger had started to see how the work was

being done, and, on reaching the forest, asked the guards if many wood-cutters had entered. They all replied that only one had made his appearance, but he must be working vigorously, since all that morning, and the whole day before, the wood had resounded with the blows of axes. The Lord Woodmount thereupon rode on in great anger, for he thought that Ranier had mocked him. But presently he came to great piles of hewn timber, which astonished him much ; and then he heard the axes' sound, which astonished him more, for it seemed as though twenty thousand wood-choppers were engaged at once, so great was the din. When he came to where the axe was at work, he thought he saw—and this was through the magic power of the fairy—thousands of wood-cutters, all arrayed in green hose and red jerkins, some felling the trees, some hewing them into square timber, and others arranging the hewn logs into piles of a hundred each, while Ranier stood looking on. He was so angry at the guards for having misinformed him, that he at once rode back and rated them soundly on their supposed un-

truth. But as they persisted in the story that but one man had passed, he grew angrier than ever. While he was still rating them, Ranier came up.

"Well, my Lord," said the latter, "if you will go or send to examine, you will find that twenty thousand trees are already cut, squared and made ready to be hauled to the King's palace-ground."

The ranger at once rode back into the forest, and, having counted the number of piles, was much pleased, and ordered Ranier to come that day week when the timber would be inspected, and if it were all properly done he would receive the twenty thousand nobles agreed upon.

"Excuse me, my Lord," suggested Ranier, "but the work has been done in two days instead of thirty; and twenty-eight days off at a hundred nobles per day makes twenty-two thousand eight hundred nobles as my due."

"True," replied the ranger; "and if you want money now——"

"Oh, no!" interrupted Ranier, "I have

three groats in my purse, and ten more at home, which will be quite sufficient for my need."

At this the ranger laughed outright, and then rode away.

At the end of a week, Ranier sought the ranger's castle, and there received not only an order on the King's treasurer for the money, but also the patent of deputy-ranger of the King's forest, and the allotment of a handsome house in which to live. Thither Ranier brought his mother, and as he was now rich, he bought him fine clothing, and hired him servants, and lived in grand style, performing all the duties of his office as though he had been used to it all his life. People noticed, however, that the new deputy-ranger never went out without his axe, which occasioned some gossip at first; but some one having suggested that he did so to show that he was not ashamed of his former condition, folk were satisfied,—though the truth was that he carried the axe for service only.

Now it happened that Ranier was walking alone one evening in the forest to observe

whether any one was trying to kill the King's deer, and while there, he heard the clash of swords. On going to the spot whence the noise came, he saw a cavalier richly clad, with his back to a tree, defending himself as he best might, from a half-dozen men in armour, each with his visor down. Ranier had no sword, for, not being a knight, it was forbidden him to bear such a weapon; but he bethought him of his axe, and hoped it might serve the men as it had the trees. So he wished these cowardly assailants killed, and when he uttered the prescribed words, the axe fell upon the villains, and so hacked and hewed them that they were at once destroyed. But it seemed to the knight thus rescued that it was the arm of Ranier which guided the axe, for such was the magic of the fairy.

So soon as the assailants had been slain, the axe came back into Ranier's hand, and Ranier went to the knight, who was faint with his wounds, and offered to lead him to his house. And when he examined him fully, he bent on his knee, for he discovered that it was the King, Dagobert, whom he had seen

once before when the latter was hunting in the forest.

The King said : " This is the deputy-ranger, Master Ranier. Is it not ? "

" Yes, sire ! " replied Ranier.

The King laid the blade of his sword on Ranier's shoulder, and said :

" I dub thee knight. Rise up, Sir Ranier ! Be trusty, true and loyal. "

Sir Ranier arose a knight, and with the King examined the faces of the would-be assassins, who were found to be great lords of the country, and among them was Lord Woodmount.

" Sir Ranier, " said the King, " have these wretches removed and buried. The office of chief ranger is thine. "

While the King was partaking of refreshments at Ranier's house, the new ranger sent trusty servants to bury the slain. After this, King Dagobert returned to his palace, whence he sent the new knight his own sword, a bald-ric and spurs of gold, a collar studded with jewels, the patent of chief ranger of the forest, and a letter inviting him to visit the Court.

Now, when Sir Ranier went to Court, the ladies there, seeing that he was young and handsome, treated him with great favour; and even the King's daughter, the Princess Isaure, smiled sweetly on him, which, when divers great lords saw, they were very angry, and plotted to injure the new-comer; for they thought him of base blood, and were much chagrined that he should have been made a knight, and be thus welcomed by the Princess and the ladies of the Court; and they hated him more as the favourite of the King. So they conferred together how to punish him for his good fortune, and at length formed a plan which they thought would serve their ends.

It must be understood that King Dagobert was at that time engaged in a war with King Grimbald, who reigned over an adjoining kingdom, and that the armies of the two kings now lay within thirty miles of the forest, and were about to give each other battle. As Sir Ranier, it was supposed, had never been bred to feats of arms, they thought if they could get him in the field, he would so disgrace himself

as to lose the favour of the King and the court dames, or be certainly slain. For these lords knew nothing of the adventure of the King in the forest—all those in the conspiracy having been slain—and thought that Ranier had either rendered some trifling service to the King, or in some way had pleased the sovereign's fancy. So when the King and some of the great lords of the Court were engaged in talking of the battle that was soon to be fought, one of the conspirators, named Dyvour, approached them, and said :

“ Why not send Sir Ranier there, sire ; for he is, no doubt, a brave and accomplished knight, and would render great service ? ”

The King was angry at this, for he knew that Ranier had not been bred to arms, and readily penetrated the purpose that prompted the suggestion. Before he could answer, however, Sir Ranier, who had heard the words of Dyvour, spoke up and said :

“ I pray you, sire, to let me go ; for, though I may not depend much upon my lance and sword, I have an axe that never fails me.”

Then the King remembered of the marvel-

lous feats which he had seen Ranier perform in his behalf, and he replied :

“ You shall go, Sir Ranier ; and as the Lord Dyvour has made a suggestion of such profit, he shall have the high honour of attending as one of the knights in your train, where he will, doubtless, support you well.”

At this, the rest laughed, and Dyvour was much troubled, for he was a great coward. But he dared not refuse obedience.

The next morning, Sir Ranier departed along with the King for the field of battle, bearing his axe with him ; and, when they arrived, they found both sides drawn up in battle order, and waiting the signal to begin. Before they fell to, a champion of the enemy, a knight of fortune from Bohemia, named Sir Paul, who was over seven feet in height, and a very formidable soldier, who fought as well with his left hand as with his right, rode forward between the two armies, and defied any knight in King Dagobert's train to single combat.

Then said Dyvour : “ No doubt, here is a good opportunity for Sir Ranier to show his prowess.”

“Be sure that it is!” exclaimed Sir Ranier; and he rode forward to engage Sir Paul.

When the Bohemian knight saw only a stripling, armed with a woodman’s axe, he laughed. “Is this girl their champion, then?” he asked. “Say thy prayers, young sir, for thou art not long for this world, I promise thee.”

But Ranier whispered to himself, “I want me this braggart hewn to pieces, and then the rest beaten;” and added, aloud: “Axe! axe! chop! chop! and work for my profit!” Whereupon the axe leaped forward, and dealt such a blow upon Sir Paul that it pierced through his helmet, and clave him to the saddle. Then it went chopping among the enemy with such force that it cut them down by hundreds; and King Dagobert with his army falling upon them, won a great victory.

Now the magic of the axe followed it here as before, and every looker-on believed he saw Sir Ranier slaying his hundreds. So it chanced when the battle was over, and those were recalled who pursued the enemy, that a group of knights and the great lords of the Court who were gathered around the King,

and were discussing the events of the day, agreed as one man, that there never had been a warrior as potent as Sir Ranier since the days of Roland, and that he deserved to be made a great lord. And the King thought so, too. So he created him a baron on the field, and ordered his patent of nobility to be made out on their return, and gave him castles and land; and, furthermore, told him he would grant him any favour more he chose to ask, though it were half the kingdom.

When Dyvour and others heard this, they were more envious than ever, and concerted together a plan for the ruin of Lord Treefell, for such was Sir Ranier's new title. After many things had been proposed and rejected, Dyvour said: "The Princess Isaure loves this stripling, as I have been told by my sister, the Lady Zanthé, who attends on her Highness. I think he has dared to raise his hopes to her. I will persuade him to demand her hand as the favour the King has promised. Ranier does not know our ancient law, and, while he will fail in his suit, the King will be so offended at his presumption that he will speedily dismiss him from the Court."

This plan was greatly approved. Dyvour sought out Ranier, to whom he professed great friendship, with many regrets for all he might have said or done in the past calculated to give annoyance. As Dyvour was a great dissembler, and Ranier was frank and unsuspecting, they became very intimate. At length, one day when they were together, Dyvour said :

“ Have you ever solicited the King for the favour promised ? ”

And Ranier answered, “ No ! ”

“ Then,” said Dyvour, “ it is a pity that you do not love the Princess Isaure.”

“ Why ? ” inquired Ranier.

“ Because,” replied Dyvour, “ the Princess not only favours you, but, I think, from what my sister Zanthé has said, that the King has taken this mode of giving her to you, and at her special instance.”

Ranier knew that the Lady Zanthé was the favourite maiden of the Princess, and, as we are easily persuaded in the way our inclinations run, he took heart and determined to act upon Dyvour’s counsel.

About a week afterward, while the King was walking in the courtyard of his palace, as he did at times, he met with Ranier.

"You have never asked of me the favour I promised, good Baron," said King Dagobert.

"It is true, your Majesty," said Ranier; "but it was because I feared to ask what I most desired."

"Speak," said the King, "and fear not."

Therefore Ranier preferred his request for the hand of the Princess.

"Baron," replied the King, frowning, "some crafty enemy has prompted you to this. The daughter of a king should only wed with the son of a king. Nevertheless, there is an ancient law, never fulfilled since the conditions are impossible, which says that any one of noble birth, who has saved the King's life, vanquished the King's enemies in battle, and built a castle forty cubits high in a single night, shall wed the King's daughter. Though you have saved my life and vanquished my enemies, yet you are not of noble birth, nor, were you so, could you build such a castle in such a space of time."

"I am of noble blood, nevertheless," said Ranier, proudly, "although I have been a wood-chopper. My father, who died in banishment, was the Duke of Manylands, falsely accused of having conspired against the late King, your august father ; and I can produce the record of my birth. Our line is as noble as any in your realm, sire, and nobler than most."

"If that be true, and I doubt it not," answered King Dagobert, "the law holds good for you. But you must first build a palace where we stand, and that in a single night. So your suit is hopeless."

The King turned and entered the palace, leaving Ranier in deep sorrow, for he thought the condition impossible. As he stood thus, the fairy, Rougevert, appeared.

"Be not downcast," she said ; "but build that castle to-night."

"Alas !" cried Ranier, "it cannot be done."

"Look at your axe," returned the fairy. "Do you not see that the back of the blade is shaped like a hammer?"

So she taught Ranier what words to use, and vanished.

When the sun was down, Ranier came to the courtyard, and raising his axe with the blade upward, he said aloud : " Axe ! axe ! hammer ! hammer ! and build for my profit ! " The axe at once leaped forward with the hammer part downward, and began cracking the solid rock on which the courtyard lay, and shaping it into oblong blocks, and heaping them one on the other. So much noise was made thereby that the warders first, and then the whole Court, came out to ascertain the cause. Even the King himself was drawn to the spot. And it seemed to them, all through the magic of the fairy, that there were hundreds on hundreds of workmen in green cloth hose and red leather jerkins, some engaged in quarrying and shaping, and others in laying the blocks, and others in keying arches, and adjusting doors and windows, and making oriels and towers and turrets. And still as they looked, the building arose foot by foot, and before dawn a great stone castle, forty cubits high, with its towers and battlements, its portcullis, and its great gate, stood in the courtyard.

When King Dagobert saw this he em-

braced Ranier, continued to him the title of his father, whose ducal estates he restored to the son, and sending for the Princess Isaure, who appeared radiant with joy and beauty, he betrothed the young couple in the presence of the Court.

So Ranier and Isaure were married, and lived long and happily ; and, on the death of Dagobert, Ranier reigned. As for the axe, that is lost, somehow, and, although I have made diligent inquiry, I have never been able to find where it is. Some people think the fairy took it after King Ranier died, and hid it again in a tree ; and I recommend all wood-choppers to look at the heart of every tree they fell, for this wonderful axe. They can not mistake it, since the word "Boldness" is cut on the blade, and the word "Energy" is printed, in letters of gold, on the handle.

III.

Didoze.

ONCE upon a time there lived a youth whose name was Fearnot. His father had been a gentleman of the Court and his mother one of the ladies in waiting to the Queen, and both were of noble descent. But the pair had given offense in some way to the royal family, whereby they lost favour. Pursued by the frown of the sovereign, they left the royal presence, and sought shelter in a small château, which had belonged to the Lady Sol, Fearnot's mother, before her marriage with the chevalier, her husband. The income of the couple was so small that they barely managed to support themselves, their only son, and one servant. In a few years their very existence was forgotten by the Court, and after their old servant died and their son had nearly arrived at the age of manhood they

died also and on the same day. Their son received their parting blessing, with an injunction to devote himself to honour and truth, and to enter the service of the King at the first opportunity, making his profession that of arms—at that period the only avenue to distinction. The father had occupied the closing years of his life in the instruction of his son, having the future profession of the latter in view; and Fearnot was enabled to ride, fence, and perform all kinds of martial exercises. He had also been taught to read, write, and compose verses so well that he was esteemed a skillful minstrel, and almost too learned for any one not destined for a clerk.

The patrimony of Fearnot was small. Besides the château and its furniture, there was a village of six small houses, tenanted by some woodmen, who paid him a small rent, a little pasture-field, about ten acres of thriving woodland, and as much more in arable ground and orchard. Besides these, he had two horses, both so aged as to have become staid in demeanour and orderly in habits, two swords, a complete suit of armour, a few silk

and velvet mantles, a gold baldrick, a harp and zither, and a purse containing twenty broad pieces of gold. It was not a tempting array of riches, and Fearnot pondered long and deeply on the best mode of winning reputation and wealth. For several nights he lay awake, engaged in thinking upon his circumstances and the course he should pursue, until the dawn surprised him, when he would fall asleep and not wake until noonday.

On the sixth of these wakeful nights he failed to fall asleep as usual on the approach of daylight. As the rays of the morning sun streamed into his scantily-furnished chamber, his eyes fell upon the opposite side of the apartment. There they rested on a switch of witch hazel, which he had picked up in the forest the day before and brought home, placing it against the wall previously to retiring to rest. As he looked on this, he observed that the top of the switch began to swell and puff, until it took the shape of a long, lank face; a couple of twigs on the upper part lengthened into a pair of thin, bony arms; and the switch, after raising itself upon its single leg, com-

menced to skip about in the most absurd way, turning all kinds of flip-flaps and somersaults, leaping over the chairs and table, and pirouetting around the room like a top. Up to the head of the bed and then down again, leaping straight upward until its head touched the ceiling, taking its foot in its mouth and rolling itself over and over like a hoop, it finally seemed to tire, and, slowly hopping to where Fearnot lay, said, in a thin, squeaking voice :

“ Good-morning, master ! ”

Fearnot had been a deal amused and astonished at the antics of the hazel wand, and replied to the salutation by a question, asking :

“ What is your name, and what do you want ? ”

“ Didoze, and to be hired as your servant, ” was the answer.

“ Very good, ” said Fearnot ; “ but what can be expected of a servant who has but one leg ? ”

Didoze laughed and shut his left eye in a knowing way. Then he put his left hand under the right-hand side of his doublet and be-

gan to pull. First he drew out a boot, secondly an ankle, and so on until he had drawn out a second leg, a full match to the one he had had before. Having thus placed himself upon a double footing, he began a series of leaps, springs, and turnovers, surpassing in their novelty everything before seen, and so very funny that Fearnot lay there and laughed at them until the tears ran down his cheeks. At length, having apparently had enough of it, the new-comer stopped and bowed as before.

“That shows how agile I am,” said Didoze. “Engage me, and you will find I can do other things besides turning flip-flaps.”

“It is very probable,” answered Fearnot; “but there is the matter of wages.”

“Oh! as for that,” returned the other, “that is easily settled. Unless I am permitted to serve without pay, I am not allowed to take a master.”

Of course, on such easy terms there was no difficulty in making a bargain; and Didoze was engaged as servant for the term of one year, or longer, if the parties should agree.

“But,” said the new-comer, “I must inform your Worship of one thing. If ever you should reveal to any one the nature of my origin, you will find me turn to a hazel wand again.”

“Say you so?” cried Fearnot. “Then rest assured that I shall say nothing about how you came to me.”

“Then, sir,” said Didoze, “breakfast awaits your Worship.”

Fearnot did not expect much in the way of breakfast. A roll of bread and a bowl of chocolate generally made his frugal morning-meal, with an egg or two, if the hens did their duty to the master of the château. But what was his astonishment, on entering the breakfasting-room, to behold a table set with a dozen covers, each of which Didoze raised in turn, and revealed various savoury dishes, whose odours created an appetite speedily destroyed by an indulgence in the things themselves. Fearnot, in short, fared most excellently, and ate a very hearty breakfast, without making remarks on the unexpected meal or inquiring whence it came.

When the breakfast was over Didoze brought some water in a ewer, with a basin and napkin, and waited until his master had washed his hands. Then he assisted him to dress for the day, bringing him for that purpose his finest velvet mantle and the gayest of his swords. He also brought forth the two horses, one of which, Sable, was caparisoned for the master, and the other, Whitefoot, was made ready for the man. Without having any particular purpose in view, Fearnot suffered himself to be persuaded by his new and singular servant, and rode forth, scarcely knowing whither.

Nothing worthy of note took place for the first hour, as they rode by a shaded way on the edge of a forest, until they came to a spot where a footpath crossed the highway. Here Didoze suddenly leaped from his horse ; and his master, on turning around to discover what had become of his queer servant, found him standing on his head upon the top of a flat stone which lay half imbedded in the turf.

“What do you mean by that freak?” inquired Fearnot.

“Master,” said the other, “being born of the witch hazel, I possess the properties of the twig from whence I sprang, and always point head downward when I come to a hidden deposit of the precious metals. Underneath this stone is a treasure, and by the hardness with which my head bumped, the treasure must be very large.”

“In that case,” said Fearnot, “we had better dig it up at once, since it is what I very much need.”

“Let us wait until midnight,” proposed Didoze, and his master assented.

On they rode for miles, until they came to a stately castle, standing amid fields and extensive forests.

“What a beautiful place !” exclaimed Fearnot.

Then Didoze explained to him that it had belonged to the Baron Bomberg, a great nobleman, who had been beheaded for conspiring with others against the King, and that it was for sale. It was well wooded and watered, there being three miles square of forest, and a beautiful river running through

the centre ; and its possession conferred a title, the owner being a baron by right of the estate. So he recommended Fearnot to buy the property, when they had secured the treasure which lay under the stone at the cross-path. While thus talking and riding along Didoze suddenly leaped from his horse and struck his head down on the ground, as he had done before.

“ Is there another treasure there ? ” inquired Fearnot.

“ No—and—yes,” was the answer. “ Beneath us is a vein of gold, which extends nearly across the Bomberg domains and goes down to the centre of the earth. It is over six inches in thickness, and he who owns it has a gold-mine that will make him richer than the King.

When night came, Didoze and his master, coming with sacks and the two horses, removed the stone at the cross-path. Underneath this they found two boxes—one very heavy and the other of much less weight. The heavy box they secured by ropes and suspended it by means of a stout pole between

the two horses, while the lighter box was put in a sack and borne on the back of Didoze. Fearnot led the horses, and, the servant following after, the twain arrived at home before midnight. Once there, Fearnot made haste to examine his prize. As he expected, the heavier and smaller box was filled with gold pieces ; but when the larger and lighter box was opened it was found to contain ten times the value of the gold in precious stones. There were more than two hundred diamonds, the smallest of which was larger than a man's finger-nail, while the rest of the box was filled with rubies, emeralds, and sapphires of astonishing size and purity. There were few such gems as these in the royal crown, and Fearnot was delighted at his enormous riches. To complete his satisfaction, he found in one of the boxes a gold plate, with the words : "*To the Finder.* May they do him more good than they ever have the unhappy wretch who has placed them under this stone."

Fearnot took the advice of his servant, and bought the Bomberg estate, thus becoming the Baron Fearnot. Didoze was made the

major-domo, with a long train of servants at his command; for, though the estate cost a large sum, there was enough of the treasure left to maintain an extensive establishment. In addition to it, the baron had another and greater source of revenue. By the advice of Didoze, he commenced to mine for gold on the estate, and discovered a vein whose richness and extent became the admiration of the country around.

Having all these riches, the young baron determined to obey the injunction of his dead father and enter on the profession of arms. So he called out his numerous retainers and prepared to offer his services to the King, Mimbrano, who was at that time engaged in war with the neighbouring King, Barbanigra.

One day, while preparations were making for a visit to the capital, Fearnot was engaged in hunting in the Black Forest, near which his castle stood, when he became separated from his attendants, in the ardour of his pursuit, and so lost his way. After winding his horn to no purpose and wandering along without discovering any beaten path, he came at

length to a little cottage, at whose door he rapped with his hunting-whip. It was opened by a young maiden, who, in despite of her coarse attire, was so graceful and beautiful that Fearnot fell deeply in love with her at once. It was with much embarrassment that he inquired of her the way out of the forest. Before she could answer him, his attendants, who had been seeking him in all directions, rode up; and, having no excuse for remaining, he was compelled to bid the beautiful peasant-girl farewell. All the way home, however, he thought of nothing but her charms; and on reaching his castle he summoned Didoze and inquired of him whom the maiden might be. But Didoze was either ignorant or not inclined to be communicative; and, on riding there the next day, Fearnot found the cottage deserted. The woodmen in the forest assured him that the place had not been tenanted for years. All inquiries were fruitless; but Fearnot only became the more enamoured of the unknown.

At length the day came when the young Baron Fearnot, at the head of a train of forty

knights and a thousand men-at-arms, paid his visit to the King. The fame of his riches had preceded him, and he found a ready audience from the sovereign, who graciously accepted the services of the young baron and his followers.

King Mimbrano was the younger of two brothers, sons of the monarch in whose service the Chevalier Fearnot and the Lady Sol had been engaged. Just after the death of his father, the elder brother, Rubino, suddenly disappeared. Shortly after that, his wife and daughter, the latter an infant, disappeared also. No traces of either could be found by the most diligent search; and at last the younger brother mounted the throne, where he had reigned for many years. He was not much beloved, however, for, though no tyrant, he was moody, capricious, and subject to fits of despondency, during which he would shut himself up from the Court for weeks at a time.

It was to this monarch that Fearnot, accompanied by Didoze as an esquire, offered the services of himself and his followers.

King Mimbrano was not only glad to accept the valuable addition to his army, but, after complimenting Fearnot on the ease and dexterity with which he managed his steed, the manner in which he bore his arms, and the elegance of his carriage, gave him a position near his person and entrusted him with the royal banner.

In process of time the two armies met in battle. Fearnot distinguished himself greatly in the fight, unhorsing knight after knight who attempted to take from him the great standard. But in spite of all effort the army of King Mimbrano was beaten, and it was only after a desperate resistance that Fearnot was enabled to retreat into one of the King's castles, wherein he was besieged by King Barbanigra. King Mimbrano had been slain in the battle, and Fearnot had been summoned to surrender, under penalty, if he refused, of having the castle stormed and the defenders put to the sword. To this summons Fearnot sent a defiance and the siege began.

At first Barbanigra attempted to carry the

place by assault ; but it was too strong and his forces were repulsed with great loss. Then he sat down before it to take the place by a regular siege. So closely did he invest the castle that no food could be got from without, and the soldiers began at length to murmur on account of the scarcity of provisions. All this troubled Fearnot very much, nor could he devise any mode of relief. As he was walking in the courtyard and thinking upon a plan to sally forth and cut a way through the besiegers, he was joined by Didoze.

“ Baron, my master,” said the latter, “ why do we stay cooped up here like rats in a pen ? ”

“ Certes ! ” answered Fearnot, “ because there is no way to get out, save over the lances of a hundred thousand men.”

“ Baron, my master,” said Didoze, “ if the great gate be not open, we can squeeze through the wicket ; and if the wicket be closed, we can creep through the grating below.”

Fearnot waited to hear more. Whereupon his squire told him there was a passage un-

derground leading from the dungeons of the castle to the cellar of a house a mile off, where King Barbanigra had established his quarters; and he offered to show him the way. So Fearnot went with him, and together they reached the house where Barbanigra held council with his great lords by day and slept at night. And while there they found that the passage led to a little room directly back of the bed-chamber of the king—a mere lumber-closet. And Didoze further informed him that on the third night there would be a grand banquet there, at which the King would entertain the chief barons and the leading knights.

“Now,” said the elfin esquire, “if you will bring hither at that time enough knights and men-at-arms to take them all prisoners, I will go forth to-morrow and arouse the country in your name, to fall upon their army, when once you have sallied forth from the castle.”

“But how will you get through their forces without being taken?”

Didoze did not answer; but, taking hold of his right foot, stuffed it and the whole

leg under his jerkin, shoving it up like the joints of a telescope. Then his arms withered down to twigs, his head contracted into a knot, and he leaned against the wall, a mere switch of witch hazel. As Fearnot looked on in astonishment, the hazel wand danced out of the dark room into the next chamber, where the King lay on his couch, and commenced such a series of queer antics that the King wondered, and called to the guard without to see it. When the guard opened the door, the wand jumped over his head and hopped its way through the camp. The men-at-arms, astonished to see a dry wand perform such feats, would have stopped it; but it slipped through their midst and was soon out of sight. As for Fearnot, he closed the trap-door after him, and, entering the underground passage, was soon back in the castle, where he made arrangements for the capture of the King and nobles.

On that night and the next Fearnot, looking from the top of the highest tower, saw great signal-fires all over the country, by which he knew that Didoze was arousing the

people and gathering together the remnants of King Mimbrano's army.

On the following night King Barbanigra and his peers came to a great banquet ; and, after much feasting, when the wine-cup began to travel fast around the board, they closed the doors to have their revel undisturbed. The King had directed his guests to leave their arms in the hall, for sometimes when excited by wine, the rude knights would quarrel, and, forgetful of the presence of the King, engage in deadly fight. So it was that, when Fearnot suddenly made his appearance among them, attended by his knights, they had no weapons with which to defend themselves, and were obliged to surrender at mercy. Fearnot caused them to be blindfolded and carried through the underground passage to the castle, where they were safely bestowed.

Just before dawn the soldiers of King Mimbrano's late army and the peasants made a descent upon the enemy's camp ; and at the same time Fearnot and his companions sallied forth from the castle. The alarm was sent to the King and his captains ; but these could

not be found. The story went from mouth to mouth that they had fled ; whereupon a panic ensued and the enemy dispersed in confusion. Thousands were slain or taken prisoners, and Baron Fearnot was welcomed by the people as their deliverer. As the late king had no children and the great lords were too jealous to permit one of their own number to reign, they all invited Fearnot to ascend the throne.

King Fearnot made a just and wise king and was much beloved by the Court and people, and the more so since the great ransom he had exacted of Barbanigra and his knights prevented for some time the imposition of taxes. But Fearnot was not happy, for he thought much on the peasant maiden whom he met in the forest and of whom he was so much enamoured.

At length his sorrow attracted the attention of Didoze, who managed to lead him to give its cause.

“ Beau sire, my King,” said Lord Hazelwand—for such was the title given to Didoze by the new monarch—“ I am able to cure your

sorrow, provided your Majesty will run further risk by taking a wife."

And then Didoze informed him that Prince Rubino had been killed by assassins hired by his younger brother, and his wife slain at the same time ; but one of the ruffians, through pity, had spared the infant child and given her in charge of a retired gentlewoman of the Court, who had brought her up with great care. For fear of accidental discovery, she had been dressed at all times like a peasant-girl, and it was she who, strolling in the forest, had taken shelter in the deserted cottage, for fear of the huntsmen, and had come to the door at the summons of Fearnot. Now that Mimbrano was dead and another king on the throne, the aged gentlewoman had brought her charge to Court.

When Fearnot next saw the Princess Graceful, clad as became her rank and radiant with beauty, he was more in love than ever. He soon found the maiden to be not averse to him, and offered her his hand. In due time they were married, amid great rejoicing of the people, and lived long and happily together.

But it chanced one day, a year after, that the Queen asked the King from whence came the strange servant, Lord Hazelwand, of whom he seemed so fond. The King at first evaded the question ; but Queen Graceful became at length so importunate, even using tears to persuade him, that he told her the whole story. So soon as he had done so he remembered the warning given him by Didoze and was troubled. Early the next morning he went to Lord Hazelwand's apartment in the palace, and only found there an old woman, who made the fires and swept the rooms in that wing of the building. He asked her if she had seen Lord Hazelwand.

"Indeed, no, your Majesty," she replied ; "not this morning. In fact, I saw nothing in this room, when I came, more than your Majesty sees now, except an old hazel switch in the corner, which I broke into pieces and used to kindle the fire. But nothing alive, your Majesty ; nothing alive."

And King Fearnot never saw Didoze again.

IV.

Jokkoree.

ONCE upon a time there lived a miller by the name of Jok, and his wife's name was Ko, and his mare's name was Rik, and his dog's name was Ree, and his cat's name was Rorum. When his first child was born, and he found it was a girl, he called her Jokkorik ; and when his second child was born, as it was a son, he called it Jokkoree. His wife complained very much of these names, saying that they were not fit to be given to children ; but the miller, who was as whimsical as he was tyrannical, bade the good woman to hold her tongue, and declared if another child were born, be it boy or girl, he would name it Jokkororum.

The boy and girl grew up, the girl being very beautiful and the boy very ugly. Jokkorik was tall and slender, with eyes of violet blue, a pure red and white complexion, and

long, golden hair. Jokkoree, on the contrary, was short, stout, and muscular, with large feet and hands, steel-grey eyes, reddish-brown hair that was bushy and stiff, and a manner that was awkward and constrained. But if he were ungainly he was also active and fearless. There was not a horse, however wild, that he could not ride, nor a wild beast, however fierce, that he feared to meet; indeed, his father complained that he was fonder of riding and hunting than of attending to the mill. But Jokkoree did not neglect his duty. He rose early and toiled late, and whenever the great mill-wheel was turning he was busy. And he was as kind hearted and frank and indifferent to praise or censure, as his sister was cruel and deceitful and vain. Yet, because Jokkoree was so very ugly and had a wide mouth and a big nose, his mother disliked and neglected him, and lavished all her love upon his sister; while his father only looked upon him as one who was strong enough to help him in the mill-work, and was easy to manage.

Out in the forest near the mill—a forest

which belonged to the Grand Duke of Kleinerberg, and where his Serene Highness and the nobles of the Court often came to hunt, there lived an old hermit with a beard as white as snow, and a body so thin that its owner looked like a living skeleton in a serge gown. To this hermit Jokkoree had always been kind when the old man came to the mill to beg a little flour, and in return the hermit taught him not only to read and write, but to do a great many other things. He showed him how to use a sword and handle a lance, for the hermit had been a knight of renown as well as a learned man in his time. He grew kinder and kinder to the boy every day, and at length, finding death about to overtake him, gave him three things which he said might prove of use as he grew older: the Sword of Potency, the Staff of Extension, and the Shoes of Endurance. The sword would cut through anything, no matter how hard it might be; the staff, at the will of the wearer, would enlarge or diminish, or change itself into any article ever fashioned out of wood; and the shoes had this quality, that he who

wore them was never tired, no matter how long he walked or how fast he might run, nor was he bent down no matter how heavy the burthen he might bear. Having explained all this, the hermit died, and Jokkoree buried him in his cave, in a spot which the hermit had hollowed out long before for this very purpose.

When Jokkorik was about ten years old, there was born a little sister, and the miller, according to his promise, named her Jokkororum. And the little girl grew up to be the most beautiful girl that was ever seen, and to be as amiable in disposition as she was lovely in person. But before she was quite sixteen years old, the father and mother both died within a month of each other, leaving their estate to Jokkorik and Jokkoree, and commending Jokkororum to the joint care of her brother and sister; and Jokkoree, a week after the death of his mother, leaving his share of the property for the support of his younger sister, took with him the sword and staff and shoes of the hermit, and mounting the best horse in the stable, went forth to seek his fortune.

So soon as he was gone, Jokkorik, who hated her younger sister because every one preferred her, insisted that Jokkororum should go into the kitchen, and become a scullion there, and Jokkororum had to submit. But, one day, the son of the Grand Duke, the Prince Prettyboi, fatigued with his hunting, stopped with his attendants at the mill, and asked for a glass of water. Jokkorik curtsied and blushed, and ordered Jokkororum to fetch it, which she did. Though the young girl was meanly clad, and marked with the tokens of her menial service, she was so beautiful and graceful, that when she had retired the Prince asked who she was.

“Only my scullion,” answered Jokkorik.

Every day afterwards the Prince came to hunt in the forest, and every day stopped to crave a drink of water. Jokkorik thought that she had fascinated him by her own charms; but one day when Jokkororum happened to be absent, the Prince inquired after her so very anxiously that the elder sister at once saw her error. After the Prince had gone, when Jokkororum returned, her sister

met her with reproaches and abuse, and, after beating her, drove her from the house, and told her never to come back again. And when the Prince returned next day, and learned of this, he caused inquiries to be made, and found that the young girl, after being traced into the country of Dunderland, had entirely disappeared.

Wishing to fathom this mystery, and anxious again to see Jokkororum, whose true condition he now discovered, he left Court and set out all alone upon his travels.

Meanwhile, Jokkoree had gone from one country to another without meeting any remarkable adventures, and, finding his purse was getting lighter, had returned by a different way. When he was about two days' journey from Kleinerberg, he stopped for the night on the edge of a huge forest, at the cottage of a woodman. In the morning, as he was preparing to go, he looked upward and saw in the distance a high rock, on which stood a huge castle, with three slender towers in front, which glittered in the rays of the morning sun. He inquired of the peasant

with whom he had lodged what building that was.

“That,” said his host, “is the castle of the giant Steelbody, the great enchanter. He is the terror of all Dunderland, and the King would share his kingdom with the man who would destroy him.”

“Why has he not been killed before this, by some stout knight of the kingdom?”

“It is easy to see, young sir, that you are a stranger,” replied the peasant. “Not only is the castle impregnable, and built on an inaccessible rock, but whoever ventures into the valley around it falls within the power of his sorcery, and is obliged to do his will. He pretends to treat them fairly too. It is said that he sets them three tasks, and if they do these, he will give them all his possessions; but if they fail, then he changes them to statues of brass, to adorn his great hall. Only the other day, a beautiful young girl, though she was meanly dressed, wandered there, and was changed to a statue; and when I described her to a young cavalier who stopped here, he went madly in pursuit of her, and per-

ished too, doubtless, as nothing was seen or heard of him afterward. The King's daughter once ventured there, or stayed there by some accident, but never returned."

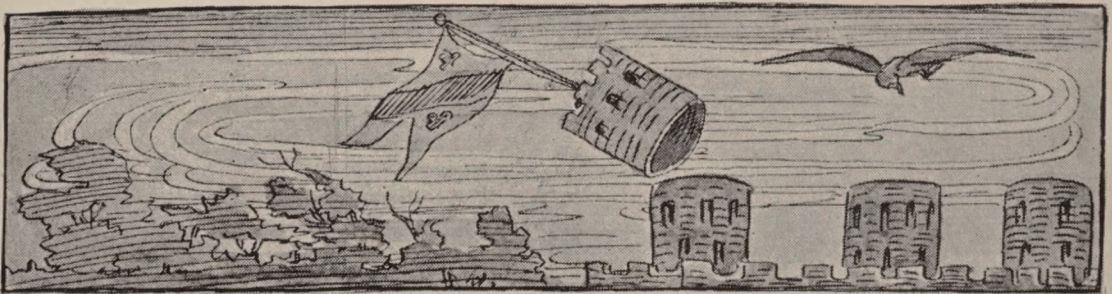
"And did not the King send his soldiers to the castle to rescue her?"

"It would be useless, even if he came out to meet them. He has made his body, by magic, as hard as steel,—whence his name,—and swords and lances only shiver when they strike him."

"I will seek this giant, and destroy him," said Jokkoree.

The peasant endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. The young man mounted his horse, and spurred on toward the castle, staff in hand, while his sword jingled at his side in the scabbard, as though it were calling him to the enterprise.

Jokkoree soon arrived at a high stone wall, along which he rode for some time without discovering any entrance. At last he came to a gap where the stones had fallen, and thus was enabled to pass. He found himself in a beautiful garden, filled with choice fruit-trees,



“ ‘IT SHALL NOT BE MY FAULT,’ SAID STEELBODY, ‘IF YOU DO NOT
STAY WITH ME A VERY LONG TIME.’ ”

parterres of flowers, and beautiful fountains. As he gazed around him, he saw a huge giant advancing, whom he rightly conjectured to be no other than Steelbody himself.

The giant, who was attended by a number of servants, put on a friendly air, and welcomed Jokkoree as though he were exceedingly pleased by his visit, inviting him to enter the castle.

"It shall not be my fault," said he, "if you do not stay with me a very long time."

Jokkoree understood the hidden meaning of these words, but he followed the giant to the rock, where a huge door opened of its own accord, and revealed a flight of stone steps, which they ascended, and which led them into the main hall of the castle.

The youth had never even dreamed of anything so splendid. The walls, the pillars that supported the roof, and the lofty ceiling were of ebony inlaid with gold, and studded with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and other precious stones; and the floor was laid in agate and lapis lazuli. On either side of the hall were pedestals, each bearing a statue of

bronze. In one of these Jokkoree recognised the figure of Jokkororum, and he started.

The giant noticed his surprise, but mistook the cause. "Ah! I see you notice one vacant pedestal. It lacks one statue to complete the collection, but I expect to have that in three days."

He then led Jokkoree to the great banqueting-room, where they found a collation ready, which was served by numerous servants richly attired. When this was over, there was a concert of music; after which, Jokkoree was shown to a chamber of equal richness with the other apartments, and here, without any fear of harm, he went to sleep.

The next morning, after he had eaten breakfast, which was served to him in bed, and dressed himself, the giant entered the chamber.

"I hope you have been pleased at your entertainment," he said. Jokkoree bowed in reply.

"There is a price to be paid for it," continued Steelbody. "I shall be compelled to ask you to do me three favours—to set three tasks

for you, in fact. If you succeed in all these, you are master of this castle and all it contains. If you fail in either, you will change into a statue of bronze, and stand upon the vacant pedestal."

"I am ready," answered Jokkoree.

"Come with me, then," said the giant, "to the valley below."

Jokkoree followed him, and when there the giant went on to say :

"Ten miles from this, on my grounds, are six stones, each as heavy as you can carry. You must go there and bring them, one by one, to this place, between now and sunset. The road is plain—the path is before you. I leave you to your labour, while I return to the castle. At sunset I will be here."

The giant left him, and Jokkoree, lacing the Shoes of Endurance tightly on his feet, ran directly on the path that stretched straight before him. He soon arrived where the stones lay, and grasping one, put it on his shoulder. It was certainly heavy, but the quality of the shoes he wore, as the hermit had told him, prevented fatigue, and he readily brought it

to the foot of the rock, running all the way with the greatest ease. In this way he made six journeys to and fro, and it was not yet noonday when he had completed his labour. When he had done it, he knocked loudly at the great door in the rock. As he did so, he heard a crash, and looking up he found that one of the three towers which made the front of the castle had fallen, and the fragments of stone had poured down on the very spot where he had stood a few moments before.

The giant made his appearance, with a vexed look.

"So you have completed your task early. That gives you a chance to do the second before the sun sets. You see yonder tree, with golden fruit in the upper branches? A basket hangs up there. You will be kind enough to get to the top, fill the basket with the fruit, and when you have brought it down carry it up to the great hall of the castle where I shall await you."

So saying, the giant entered the portal, and the door closed.

Jokkoree looked at the tree, and found

the trunk, which was slender and lofty, was studded thickly with bright steel points, as sharp as razors, extending in every direction, rendering it impossible to climb. But the youth was nowise daunted at that. He remembered his Staff of Extension. Placing that before him, he wished it to become a ladder long enough to reach to the first branch of the tree. The staff split in two, and went upward, rounds appearing between the two parts as it climbed, until it finally rested where desired. Up this ladder Jokkoree ascended, and, taking the basket, speedily filled it with the golden fruit. Then he descended, the ladder shrank back again into a staff, and Jokkoree, with his basket on his arm, knocked at the great door in the rock, which opened as before. As it did this, there was a great crash, and a second tower of the castle fell.

The giant met him in the hall, and took the basket of fruit which Jokkoree offered. He was very pale, and said,—

“You have performed two of the tasks ; but the third is more difficult. Take the sword which I see you wear by your side, and strike

off my head. If you fail in that, you are lost."

Jokkoree drew his sword, and the giant bent his head low that it might be reached, while a malignant twinkle in his eye showed his faith in the invulnerability of his body to all weapons. The youth trembled, for he remembered what the peasant had told him ; but he also remembered what the hermit had said, and how the shoes and staff had proved themselves. So he drew his sword and smote lustily.

There was a crash, and the last of the three towers fell, as the head of the giant rolled upon the floor. At the same moment the statues changed into living forms, stepped from their pedestals, and crowded around their deliverer. Jokkororum threw herself in the arms of her brother, while Prince Prettyboi gazed at her in admiration.

There were knights and dames, nobles and burghers, who pressed around to thank Jokkoree ; and one of the ladies, whom the rest recognised and paid deference to, gave him her hand to kiss. This was the Princess Brytize, the only daughter of the puissant

Woodenhed, King of all Dunderland. And the servants all hastened to acknowledge Jokkoree as their master, and as heir, by the terms of the three achieved tasks, to the titles and estate of Steelbody, Count of Aircastle and Lord Nozoo.

King Woodenhed fulfilled his promise, and gave over half of Dunderland to Jokkoree, who reigned as king there. But as the old King had no son, he made his co-king marry the Princess Brytize, that the whole realm might be kept in the family.

Jokkoree and Jokkororum, who was afterward married to Prince Prettyboi, forgave Jokkorik, and King Jokkoree invited her to his Court, where she married a great noble, Count Henpekt, with whom she became tolerably happy. At least, the noble count seemed very proud of her; for he said she was of that amiable disposition that he did not believe there was any one in the world, excepting King Jokkoree, and the Crown Princess of Kleinerberg, and himself, whom she hated very intensely. Considering the former character of the Countess Jokkorik, this was very high praise indeed.

V.

The Black Cat.

ONCE upon a time, in the great kingdom of Nomansland, which borders on the Mythical Ocean, and is bounded by the principality of Bosh on one side and the empire of Fancy on the other, there stood, on the banks of a swift and shallow brook, and against a huge grey rock, an old mill. It was, in truth, a very old mill, and fast falling into decay. The foundation had sunk a little on one corner, and the timbers had followed it, giving the building an air of decrepitude: the roof had numerous rents, and an abundance of leak-holes in its moss-covered thatch; the boards that covered the frame-work had dropped off here and there, while those that remained were warped and cracked with age and the weather, as well as covered with lichens; and even the mill-wheel, upon which the business of the

place so much depended, was well stricken in years, and had been robbed by Time of some of its floats, and deprived by an accident of one of its arms, so that, instead of turning with a decorous and orderly motion, it went around with a succession of jerks, as though its temper had been soured and its patience lost through age and misfortune. Yet the mill itself was one of that kind on which the eye of an observer, unless he be a miller, rests with pleasure, since its very crumbling look and the moss that covered it harmonised with the grey rock behind it, and the grass and trees around; though for the actual purposes of a mill, it was a very sorry place indeed.

But, bad as a mill may be through age and decay, it can be made much worse through having nothing to do. A mill, like a little boy or girl, must be kept busy part of its time, or it speedily falls to ruin. Now the mill was willing enough to work, and so was the miller, but the heat of the summer had been very great, and had dried up the springs of the brook. The springs refusing to flow,

the brook could not run ; the brook not running, the wheel would not turn ; and the wheel not turning, the stones would not grind. So, after waiting for some days, and seeing no prospect of rain, the customers carried their grist elsewhere to be ground, and left the miller by himself, to consider his troubles as he best might.

The miller was a very young miller indeed, not being over twenty years old. He was the son of an old soldier who had been an esquire to a poor knight in the wars, and, having received a wound in Palestine which disabled him for life, had come back to his native country with enough money to buy this mill, and live there with his son, his wife having died while he was away. Here he not only managed to earn a livelihood, but to put away some groats for the future ; and when he died, which was about two years before our story opens, he left his son his blessing, with the mill and a leathern bag full of silver crowns.

Now when the drought came and the stream dwindled to a silver thread, and then sank

entirely, Hubert—for that was the name of the boy—was not much troubled. Rain would come, he thought, in its own good time; and even if it waited until late in the autumn, was there not the leathern bag filled with silver, and would that not keep him in comfort until the waters rose? But when the toll-meal was nearly out and Hubert went to look for the bag, he found that some one had been before him. The bag was indeed there; but, instead of presenting a plump appearance, its leathern sides were shrunk and shriveled. All the money had been carried away with the exception of three silver groats; and, live as frugally as he might, these would not keep their owner in food longer than six weeks. Still, all he could do was to wait patiently and see if the rains would fall, and the waters rise, and the wheel go round, and the stones turn, and people come again with their corn to be ground.

One day as he was seated at the mill-door peering into the sky in search of clouds, he heard a faint cry near him, and, looking down, beheld a black cat that was rubbing its head

against his legs, and trying to make itself agreeable.

It was a sorry cat to look at. It seemed to be little more than a mass of bones over which a ragged skin had been tightly drawn, and it was covered with scars and bruises—showing that it had been pelted by unruly boys and chased by savage dogs, had been used to too little food and too much harsh usage. The heart of Hubert was filled with pity for the lone and friendless animal, in spite of its gauntness and ugliness, and he set before it some porridge, which the poor creature hastily devoured. When it had eaten its fill it came up to him again, suffered him to stroke it, rubbed its head against him, purred, and showed every sign of gratitude.

“You have sought a poor master,” said Hubert; “but you are wretched and an out-cast, and shall share with me my food so long as I have any.”

The cat gave a loud purr as though in reply, and then curled itself up on an old rug and went to sleep.

By the end of the week the cat had grown

sleek and in good condition, and was such a handsome animal, as well as such an industrious mouser—though it was noticed that she never ate the mice she caught—that Hubert grew proud as well as fond of her, and bestowed on her constant caresses, to which she responded by every possible sign of cat friendship.

She was a very black cat indeed, and her fur long and glossy; but there was an exception to this in five long white hairs that stood in a tuft upon the top of her head, midway between the ears. This was a blemish, and Hubert determined to get rid of it. To pluck them all out at once would inflict some pain, and therefore he would not get rid of them in that way; but he thought that to remove them one by one, at intervals, would produce no inconvenience to his favourite. So one evening, as she was seated in his lap, where she liked to nestle, he managed to pull out one of these white hairs, and immediately burned it in the rush-light that stood before him on the table.

Hardly had the faint odour of the single

burned hair come upon his nostrils when he heard a crash behind him, and turning around saw that a panel had disengaged itself from the wainscoting and had fallen to the floor. He put the cat gently down, and rose to replace the piece of wood, when he saw a recess in the wall so bared, and in this a hammer and a linen bag. Hoping that it contained money he opened the latter, but found its contents to be only nails.

“Well,” he said, “this is a disappointment; but the mill-wheel and the mill both need repairing, and these will be useful. So you and I, Pussy, will go to work to-morrow, though I question if the boards will stand much hammering.”

He replaced the panel, fastened it, and without thinking more of the hairs, went to bed.

The next morning Hubert commenced the repairing of the mill. To his great astonishment the boards not only bore the hammering without flinching, but wherever they were struck the moss would drop off, and the wood show itself sound and apparently new beneath.

As there was a deal of hammering to do the wood improved accordingly, and at the end of a week the mill seemed almost like a new building, and as for the mill-wheel, it looked as though it had been recently made and fitted to its place. Hubert rubbed his eyes in wonder. The old mill had lost its greyness, and, when he had propped up the sunken corner, seemed to be a very smart building, and likely to stand a long and successful contest with wear and tear and the winds and rain.

But there was no rain, and there was the trouble. All this smartness of appearance, and soundness of the structure, and capability of the mill-wheel, seemed to be of no particular use so long as there was no water in the brook. Hubert finally put the hammer away, and at the close of the day sat down to amuse himself with the black cat.

“The loss of that hair didn’t seem to trouble you,” said Hubert to the cat; “so I’ll even rid you of another in the same way.”

Thus saying, he pulled out another hair, which he burned in the rush-light as before.

The moment that the hair had been con-

sumed, another panel of the wainscoting fell from its place to the floor with a crash. Hubert went to replace it, and, as before, found a recess, in which was, not a hammer and bag of nails, but a small vial, corked, and containing a clear and transparent liquid.

"This seems to be water," said Hubert, as he examined it, "but it may be poison. If it be water, it is too little to be of service; if it be poison, it is dangerous to have here. As the bottle may be useful, I will empty its contents out of doors."

So he went out to the brook-side, and, after uncorking the vial, poured its contents on the ground. Just as he did so a rush like the wings of some huge bird passed him, the wind began to rise rapidly, and there was a sudden dampness all around him. The sky darkened with huge clouds, and he had barely time to enter the house before the rain began to pour down in a fierce torrent which continued without cessation until morning.

When Hubert arose, he found the rain had ceased and the sky was clear. The sun was shining warmly, and all was bright and beau-

tiful. But the bed of the brook was filled, and it was swollen until it seemed like a river. Long before noon, as far as the eye could reach, was to be seen a procession of horses, mules, and donkeys, some led and others ridden, but each bearing a bag of grist on its back, and all on their way to the mill ; for the flood had swept all the other mills away in its fury, and Hubert's only remained to supply the needs of the people around. So, for a week, until matters could be mended, Hubert's mill was the only resource. It could scarcely supply the demand fast enough, and Hubert was obliged to hire a journeyman to assist him, while the wheel turned merrily, and bag after bag of the toll-corn accumulated in the granary.

A week after the freshet, Hubert, worn out with the toil of the day, sat with his cat on his lap.

" This has been a good week's work," he said, " and if it continue, I shall be able to get me a new doublet and trunk hose, which I want sadly, for indeed my whole wardrobe needs replenishing. As for you, Miss Pussy, as you seem not to mind losing those ugly

white hairs, I'll just pull out another, with your permission."

So he plucked a third hair, and burned it in the candle as before. The moment it blazed up in the light a crash was heard, and a third panel of the wainscoting fell.

Hubert sprang up, and beheld a recess deeper and wider than either of the others, in which there stood three huge trunks. He lifted the lid of one, and found beneath a number of plumed and jewelled caps, and boots of buff leather and shoes of velvet, and the finest silken hose. He lifted the lid of a second, and there was a store of linen garments, beautifully stitched and elaborately embroidered, and of such elegant workmanship and rare fineness of material as he had never before seen. He then examined the third trunk, which was filled with rich dresses of silk and fine cloth and velvet, and on top of them lay the pieces of a suit of armour of Milan steel, inlaid with gold, and a sword of Damascus, with the hilt studded with diamonds. Above the trunks a roll seemed to lie in a deep recess. Hubert drew it forth, and

it proved to be a knightly lance with a bright point and a polished ashen staff.

"This is all very curious," said Hubert ; "but I cannot wear these here, and I may as well put them carefully away."

So he brought out the trunks, and put them in a corner, and went to bed, and slept long and soundly.

During the whole week the customers came flocking to the mill, for the other mills were not quite in order yet, and when the Saturday night came, Hubert began to think it was time to fix a day to grind up his own grist. So he sat down, with his cat on his lap, to consider on the matter.

"To be sure," he said, "I have beautiful dresses, such as a prince might wear ; but I ought to be rich to be so finely clad, or I would be no better than a jackdaw in the plumes of a peacock. If I had only plenty of money, now—but that is like wishing for the moon. Pussy, there are only two hairs left ; I must have one of them."

So saying, he pulled it out, and burned it in the flame of the candle.

A crash again, and the last panel of the wainscoting on that side of the house fell. Hubert jumped up eagerly, and there, in a recess, stood a great pile of bags, and on shelves a number of beautiful caskets. Each bag that he opened was filled with golden pieces, and after examining two or three, he turned to the caskets. These were each about a foot square. One of them contained pearls of the finest water, and as large as pigeons' eggs; another held diamonds; a third, rubies; a fourth, emeralds; a fifth, sapphires; and so on, through all the precious stones known.

"It seems to me," said Hubert, after he had a little recovered from his wonder, "that I am rich enough; but I ought to be a great man with all this wealth, and have horses and retainers and men-at-arms. And now I think of it, all these fine things came after I had pulled out a white hair from the black cat. There is still one hair left. I don't want to hurt your feelings, Pussy, but really, if you have no objection——"

The cat seemed as though she understood

him, for she put her head up to his hand, and stood patiently, but she trembled all over. Then Hubert took the hair, pulled it out, and burned it in the flame of the candle.

A crash almost like a clap of thunder shook the mill. The cat disappeared, and in its stead there stood a tall and beautiful young lady, clad in black velvet, with five white plumes on her head, and at her feet lay a dried cat-skin. The side of the room next the rock at the same moment dissolved, and showed a long row of stables, with steeds splendidly caparisoned, men in armour, and grooms, and a stately esquire who stood by the handsomest horse of them all, a jet-black Arabian, with five white tufts of hair on his forehead.

“Hubert,” said the lady, “I am the fairy Catanoira, who fell under the power of my enemy, the ogre Growlando, who quarreled with me because I refused to marry him. He is an adept in sorcery, and resorted to arts which are forbidden to fairies. By means of these he condemned me to take the form in which you first saw me, in which I was to

remain until some one who had taken pity on my forlorn condition should burn, one by one, the five white hairs on my head. This having been done, his power over me would cease. And now, to prove that I am not ungrateful, ask anything of me that it is in my power to grant, and it shall be yours."

"Beautiful Catanoira," said Hubert, "I have enough wealth, and all the arms and apparel of a knight, through you. I know of nothing that would make my happiness perfect, unless it were your hand; and it is perhaps too much for a miller, and the son of a miller, to ask a powerful and lovely fairy to be his bride."

The fairy blushed as she answered: "We fairies are not apt to conceal our feelings, as do mortal women, and I am content to marry you, for since I have lived in my enchanted shape under your roof I have learned to love you. But you must remember, that in marrying a mortal, I become a mortal myself; that I lose thereby my power, and am no more than any other young woman whom you might have chosen to share your heart and fortunes."

With this declaration Hubert was only the more charmed. In due time the wedding was celebrated with great rejoicings; and from this union there sprang the great house of Catanoir-Criesach, that so long reigned in the duchy of Criesach, and is now one of the noblest of the princely houses of Europe.

VI.

The Three Gifts.

ONCE upon a time, in the land of Nowhere, there stood, in the centre of a wide plain, a high and rocky hill, on top of which was an old castle. In this castle there dwelt a giant named Doubtful. This giant was then poor, although at one time he had been very rich. He had owned the country for miles and miles around, with its mansions, villages, and fertile farms, and had had hundreds of vassals. But, from time to time, his possessions had slipped from his hands, and his vassals had been transferred to other masters, until he was left with a barren hill, a few sterile acres around it, the old castle, and one serving-man, who would not leave him, though he was not always sure of a meal. The giant might possibly have bettered his fortune by some exertion, but he was always undecided as to what he should

do, and so he suffered his life to drift on as it might.

Down at the foot of the hill dwelt a dwarf named Try. He had come a year before, and asked the giant if he might build himself a hut there on the barren ground. He was a bright, lively little fellow, and the giant took pity on him. "The ground is rocky and poor," said Doubtful, "but if you think you can make anything out of it, you are welcome. I give you an acre of ground, on the edge of my land, to belong to you and yours forever; but I warn you that it is of no value."

Try thanked him, and set to work diligently. With the larger stones on the land he soon built a hut, which he covered with boughs brought from the neighbouring forest, and he thatched these with sedge-grass.

Then he easily found work in the forest, for he was a skilled wood-chopper; and, on coming home at night, he toiled for hours on his own plot of ground.

Gradually he cleared the place of loose stones, and with them built a wall around his acre. He brought peat from the bogs, and,

by permission of the owners, leaves from the forest, and the giant gave him the ashes from his fire. With these he made a large muck-heap, which he then used to make the land fertile. In the course of time, the giant looked down upon a blooming garden beneath him, and at a stone hut on whose rough walls the blossoming vines clambered; and he admired the perseverance and industry of his little neighbour.

By and by, the giant, because he was lonely in his castle, used to go down and talk with the little man, who had given up wood-chopping, and depended on his garden for a livelihood. Try had bought some adjoining acres from the owners, who were glad to get rid of their poor land at a trifle, and this land he improved as he had improved the first, and thus prospered greatly. The giant began to be very fond of this cheery and busy dwarf, and the dwarf returned this fondness; so, the two soon became fast friends.

Now, the dwarf was a generous fellow, and any one who came along in need received from him a day's work and a night's lodging,

with plenty to eat, and, at parting, the wages of his labour. But to those who were very old, or very young, or weak, or infirm, he gave the food and lodging without asking for anything in return.

One evening, just at nightfall, there came along an old woman, who craved charity. Try gave her a supper, a night's lodging, and breakfast, and, as she was leaving, offered her a small piece of money.

But the old woman said to him : " I always pay for my food and bed in some way, and as I have no money, I offer you this, which I beg you to take, and luck go with it." Then she handed him a necklace of rough stones, strung together.

" But what is this ? " asked Try, " and what am I to do with it ? "

The old woman replied : " It is the necklace of Strength, and whoever wears it can contend with any one. Travel ! " Then she departed without further words.

When the giant came down that day to chat with Try, he saw the stones around the neck of the dwarf, and asked him what they

were. Then Try told him, and also from whom he had obtained them.

“They can be tested very readily,” said the giant. “Suppose you pull against me, and learn whether they have made you any stronger than you were.”

The dwarf and the giant pulled against each other, and, to the astonishment of both, Try dragged Doubtful all over the place with the greatest ease.

“There is something in the necklace, after all,” said Doubtful; “and while you were pulling me around, I think I must have pulled you out a little; for yesterday and this morning your head was only as high as my knee, and now, as I stand here, I can just touch your head with my hand, without stooping a bit.”

Try found it to be as the giant said.

That evening, an old man, who carried a long and narrow package, came and begged for food and a bed, both of which Try gave him. The next morning, the dwarf bade his guest godspeed, and gave him some food to take with him.

But the old man said to him: “I am always

able to pay my way, although I have no money." Thus saying, he undid the package, from which he took a huge two-handed sword, and this he presented to Try.

"What is this, and what am I to do with it?" asked Try.

The old man replied: "This is the sword of Courage, and with this you may smite through steel and brass, and the solid rock, for nothing can resist it. Travel!"

Having said this, the old man went away.

When the giant came down that day, he saw the sword hanging on the wall, and inquired about it of Try, who told him.

"I doubt very much the power of the weapon," said Doubtful; "but it is easy to test it."

Try took the sword, and going to the hill, at a place where a crag projected, struck the rock with the sword. It did not seem to be much of a blow, but the weapon went through as though the stone had been turf, and it shaved off about a half-ton fragment, which fell and rolled over, and half-buried itself in the ground.

"A potent weapon, truly," remarked the

giant; "but it seems to me you are growing, or I am getting smaller. Yesterday, I could just touch your head with my hand as I stood erect, and to-day you are nearly up to my waist."

And it was just as he said.

That evening, there came along a small boy, bearing a package, and he asked for something to eat, and for shelter for the night. These Try gave him, and the next morning, seeing that the boy was weak and puny, Try offered him some small coins, and wished him speed.

But the boy replied: "Poor as I am, I intend always to pay for what I get, and get what I pay for. Here in this bundle are the shoes of Ambition, which are of no service to me, and I give them to you in return for what I have had."

"But of what use are they, and what am I to do with them?"

"With these you may go as fast as you will, and not be tired. Wear them, and you can make your way over any road, and even climb up the side of walls, or trees, or steep rocks. Travel!"

And the boy ran off. Try looked after him, and he saw only an old man moving on slowly. Then he looked again, and merely saw an old woman, who at length disappeared.

When the giant came down that day, he soon saw that Try wore a pair of new shoes.

“Those are very handsome, and look to be strong,” he said. “What did you pay for them?”

Try told him all about them.

“Have you tried what they can do?” asked Doubtful.

“Not yet, but I shall,” replied Try.

So he ran along the ground for some distance, and, coming to a huge tree, ran up the trunk, and seated himself among the branches. Then he ran down, and returned.

“They are very convenient,” said Doubtful, “and I think I should like a pair from the same shop. But, how you do grow! Yesterday, you were nearly up to my waist, and now you are three inches above it. In fact, you are no longer a dwarf, but a tall, stout young man. But what do you intend to do with the three gifts?”

"To-morrow," said Try, "I intend to set out upon long travels in search of adventures and a fortune."

"I shall miss you very much," said the giant, "but I think I shall go with you, if you will have me for a companion."

And Try agreed to this.

The next day, Try put his garden, and the giant put his castle, in charge of the serving-man. Try girt on his sword, and with his necklace around his throat, and his shoes on his feet, he started out with the giant, who was armed with a huge club, in search of adventures.

After they had travelled for three months, and had found nothing remarkable, Doubtful grew tired, and went back to his castle, despite the persuasion of his comrade; but Try kept right on, and that very night came to a hut in a valley, where he sought shelter. The inmate of this hut was an old woman, who made him welcome. Looking at her closely, he saw she was the same who had given him the necklace of Strength.

"Ah! my good mother," said he, "I have

travelled as you told me, and thus far have gained nothing thereby."

"Your journey is not over," said she. "Two days from this you will come to a wide plain, on which stands a high rock, known as Mount Inaccessible. On that rock is a castle of steel, and in that castle lives an Ogre. He has carried off the Princess Graceful, the daughter of King Mikron, and because she will not consent to marry him, he keeps her locked up in a tall tower that overhangs the moat, and feeds her on bread and water. Many knights have tried to rescue her, since her father has promised her hand and the succession to his throne to her deliverer; but the Ogre either has come out and slain them, or, if he thought them too powerful, has shut himself up in his castle, and defied them. The hill is a perpendicular rock, with polished sides, and the Ogre leaves and returns to it by a huge set of brazen stairs, that rise or fall at his pleasure. No one, therefore, has been able to scale the hill, nor would they have gained thereby, since the castle is built of the hardest steel. It is this castle that you must

gain, and slay the Ogre, and deliver the Princess of Wonderland."

"How shall I find this castle?"

"To-morrow, when you have gone a mile on your journey, my brother will overtake you, and be your companion for a day. You will lodge with him at nightfall, and he will instruct you further. Eat now, and refresh yourself, and then go to sleep, for you have a long journey before you to-morrow."

Try did as he was told, and early the next morning bade farewell to the old woman, who flung her shoe after him as he set out on his journey. After he had gone a mile, he was overtaken by an old man, whom he recognised as the one who had given him the sword. The old man merely nodded his head, but said nothing, and thus the two travelled together. At nightfall, they reached the old man's hut, where they rested.

In the morning, the old man said: "The Ogre will not come down to you, for it has been foretold to him that he can be overcome only by a man without armour, as you now are. Entice him out of his stronghold. Scale the

rock, and enter his stronghold, or wait until he comes out; but let him not see you. When you have gone on from here, and have come within a mile of the edge of the plain wherein the hill of the Ogre stands, my son, who is in the forest, will join you, and instruct you further."

Try thanked his host, and resumed his journey. At a mile beyond the hut, a boy came from the wood, and joined him; and Try knew him to be the same who had given him the shoes of Ambition. The boy, who said his name was Helper, told him all about the Princess, of whom he said that she was as good as she was beautiful, and that her father, who loved her tenderly, had laid siege to the castle for a whole year, and finding it impossible to take, had at last raised the siege, and had gone home to wait for the champion who was to deliver her from the Ogre's power.

"But," continued the boy, "now that we have arrived at the plain, I must leave you. Here, in this scrip, are food and drink that you may need. Stay here until nightfall,

and then go forward in the darkness to the rock which you see yonder. Find some spot where you can mount. The rock is polished, and the shoes of Ambition are useless unless there is some roughness over which they may travel. But there is no armour without a flaw, and some part of the rock, if you look well, may serve your turn."

So the boy left, and Try waited, concealed in the wood, until nightfall, when he made his way to the rock, which he reached at midnight, and finding a hiding-place amid the low growth at the base of the rock, he lay down, and slept until dawn.

As soon as it was light, Try arose and examined the rock, and found it to be polished everywhere. But after having gone nearly around it, he came to a small crevice that extended to the top irregularly, and in this crevice a huge ivy had clambered and fixed itself. Up this, Try readily made his way, and so gained the top. Arrived there, he seemed to be no better off than before, for the walls had apparently no opening but the great gate, and there was a deep moat around the castle,

and the drawbridge was up. So Try sat down under a projecting rock on the surface to consider.

As he sat there, he could see the plain before him, and over it there came a horseman. As he rode nearer, Try could see that it was the old man, mounted on a powerful charger, and bearing a staff in his hand. This he brandished in the air, while loudly defying the Ogre to single combat. But the Ogre did not hear him, or was not disposed to heed, for he did not come out, and after an hour the old man rode away as he had come.

At high noon, there came a palfrey on which the old woman sat. She rode up to the rock and berated the Ogre soundly, calling him coward, and a number of other offensive names, and daring him to come and talk to her. But the Ogre did not hear, or, hearing, only felt contempt, and so did not leave his stronghold. The old woman, having apparently exhausted her stock of words, and finding no good to come of it all, went her way and was seen no more.

Two hours later, there came some one on a

pony, and Try knew him for the boy he had left in the forest. This new-comer had no weapons, but he bore a small horn, and he kept sounding this in a very contemptuous and insulting manner. It appeared as if this excited the anger of the Ogre, for the drawbridge fell, the gates opened, and the Ogre sallied out, and, as the drawbridge rose and the gate closed, he made his way to where the brazen stairs lay coiled up and waiting for his will to unroll them.

Try sprang forward, sword in hand, and assailed the Ogre, who defended himself vigorously. He was stout and strong, and cunning of fence ; but the sword of Courage was too potent for him. Try clove him in twain at a blow, and then turned to enter the castle.

But here was a new difficulty. The moat was impassable even to the shoes of Ambition ; the necklace of Strength was useless where no grip was to be had ; and the gate was too far off to receive a blow from the sword of Courage. Try wandered around, and for a while saw nothing but the blank steel walls. At length he came to where a projecting turret

overhung the moat, and he saw that it had one window guarded by steel bars. Between these there peered a beautiful face, and so he knew this was the prison of the Princess.

As he stood there gazing upward, a ball to which a cord was attached was thrown from the window, and fell at his feet. Try pulled the cord, and a silken ladder followed, the end of which he fastened to the ground, and then he mounted. A few blows with the sword of Courage, and the grating was severed and fell inward. Try entered, and knelt at the feet of the Princess, who raised him graciously.

Try had no more than time to take one glance at the beautiful face of the lady, when the door of the chamber was thrown open violently, and the retainers of the Ogre, eager to avenge their master, burst in and assailed him. But the sword of Courage did its office. One by one, Try slew all his antagonists, and then, leading the Princess, he descended the stairs to the hall of the castle, opened the gate, and lowered the drawbridge. They went out to the brazen stairs, that were rolled

up, but the spell of the dead Ogre still bound them, and they could not be moved by the utmost power which Try could exert. The young pair stood five hundred feet above the plain, and unable to get down. The Princess was as much a prisoner as before, but with a companion in misfortune. Try forgot about the mode of scaling the rock, and that he might descend, safely bearing the Princess, by the way he came. The beauty of Graceful dazed him.

Suddenly the Princess remembered, and bade Try go to the dead body of the Ogre, and remove the ring of Knowledge from his finger, for that would render all parts of the castle obedient to his will ; had Try known this earlier, he would have gained entrance by means of the drawbridge and gate. Try put on the ring, and, at his wish, the great brazen stairs unrolled themselves and stretched to the ground below. These they descended, and found the boy and the pony, and with him were the horse and palfrey that had been ridden by the old man and the old woman. Try set the Princess upon the pal-

frey, mounted the war-horse, and turned to speak to the boy ; but he and the pony were gone. In their stead was a floating car to which three swans were harnessed, and in it sat a lady of surpassing beauty, clad in blue and gold.

“ Try,” said the lady, “ I am the Fairy Friendly, who presided at thy birth, and I have watched over thee for years. I was the boy, and the old man, and the old woman, and from me came the three gifts. I have summoned hither the King Mikron to receive his daughter, and to bestow her on thee in marriage. Thou hast been successful because thou hast persevered. Go forth, meet the King, and be happy.”

Saying this, she smiled, the swans rose in air, and the fairy was borne away in her car. The two watched her until she faded from their sight, and then rode forward to meet the King, whose knights and men-at-arms were debouching into the plain, while he galloped at great speed far in advance. He received them both with tears of joy, and, after the brazen stairs had been made immovable, he

placed a garrison in the castle in the name of Try, whom he created Count of Castle Inaccessible.

After they reached the capital city of Wonderland, Try and Graceful were married amid great rejoicing. During the honeymoon, Try bethought him of his friend the giant, and sent to inquire about him. He learnt that Doubtful had been obliged to sell his castle, and that he and his serving-man were living upon Try's few acres. Try at once sent for the giant, who came at the summons. But Try, who had been created Prince, and was hailed as heir-presumptive, scarcely knew his friend. While Try himself had grown so high that he towered over those around him, Doubtful had shrunk so in his stature as to be little more than a dwarf.

However, Try placed Doubtful near his person, and when, some years after, King Mikron died, and Try, with his Queen Graceful, ascended the throne, he made him a great lord of his Court, creating him Baron Uncertain and Count Littlefellow.

VII.

Jack the Terrible.

ONCE upon a time there lived in the Land of Aisklepia an old physician whose name was Cure-all. He had made a fortune by the practice of his art, and lived very comfortably in a large house in the midst of a wide domain. His wife was dead, but he had seven sons living. Six of these were tall and stout, and could outjump, out run, and outwrestle any one in the neighbourhood. The youngest son, Jack, was slender, not above the middle height, and, though tolerably strong and quick, could not compete with his brothers in feats of strength and activity. Hence, they nicknamed him the Dwarf and Baby Jack, and made sport of him. Jack bore this as best he could ; but when he became twenty-one years old he told his father that his life was miserable, and begged leave to go abroad and seek

his fortune. His father gave him permission, and with it his blessing. He also gave him three things more, with which he might earn his living. The first was a small knife, that would operate of itself upon any wen or cut any substance, however hard. The second was a vial of eye-water, that in three applications would restore the blind to sight. The third was a pot of salve, the virtue of which was that anointing with a little of its contents would at once heal a broken limb. These he took, bade a farewell to his father, to whom he promised to return when he had made his fortune, and then set out on his journey.

"But," said he, "it will never do to be known as Jack the Dwarf or Baby Jack. I must choose something of more pretence. So I shall call myself Jack the Terrible."

Jack travelled all day, and at night came where a gnome dwelt in a cave by the roadside. Here he craved some food and shelter for the night.

"You can have the shelter," said the gnome; "but as for the food, you will seek to find it. I have to bite off the young shoots

of the bushes and take fruit by my mouth, for, in consequence of my terrible disease, I cannot use my hands."

And the gnome showed his hands to Jack. His finger-nails had grown over a yard long, and were curved like a sickle and had changed into steel.

"Why don't you trim them?" inquired Jack.

"They are so hard that no knife will cut them," replied the gnome.

"Then I, Jack the Terrible, am the man for your money," said Jack, "and I shall relieve you at once." So he produced his wonderful knife, and trimmed the nails speedily.

The gnome thanked him very much, and set to work and helped Jack to prepare supper; after which they both went to bed.

The next morning Jack offered the gnome a piece of money for his entertainment; but the gnome refused.

"Gold is of no use to me," said the gnome, "since all the gold and silver in these mountains belong to me; and, if you are in want of dross of that kind at any time, come to me

and you shall be supplied. But I am still your debtor. Take this talisman," and he handed him a ring. "When you come to a mountain too high to climb, turn this once around on your finger, and the ground will open so that you and yours can pass through safely."

Jack took the ring, thanked the gnome for his gift, and set out on his travels. By nightfall he came to a large mansion, where a wizard dwelt. He went in to seek for food and lodging, and found the wizard in the courtyard, where he had fallen from a window and broken his leg. He asked him what was the matter; and when he learnt it, and that his servants had taken advantage of his mishap to run away, Jack bade him be of good cheer, for he would help him. So he took out his pot of salve, and, anointing the limb, it knit immediately, and the wizard arose and thanked him. Then the wizard took up three sticks from a pile of fagots, and, changing them into three stout servants, bade them prepare a meal for him and his benefactor, which they did.

Jack lodged there all night, and when he had breakfasted in the morning the wizard said : " You have helped me, and now I shall help you. Gird this sword to your side. Whenever you need, strike the point of the weapon three times on the ground, and the earth will sink as deep as you choose, where and how you choose."

Jack took the sword and thanked him, and continued his journey. He travelled all that day, and when night came found himself near a small hut, at which he knocked. He heard a voice bidding him come in, whereupon he opened the door and entered.

He found there a little old woman, seated by the fire, who asked him what he wanted. And when he told her, she said : " You can sleep here and eat what you can find ; but I am a witch, and they say I am wicked, and I know I am blind."

Jack was a little afraid, but he plucked up courage and said : " I don't know that you are wicked, good mother ; and, if you are, I am Jack the Terrible, and why should I fear ? You are old, and so would my mother be, if

she were alive ; and hence I pay you respect. As to your being blind, that is nothing ; for, if you will let me wash your eyes with the water I have in this vial, you will soon be able to see."

So the old woman said he might try. Jack washed her eyes, and asked her if she could see.

"There is a glimmer of light, and nothing more," said the old woman.

Jack washed her eyes again, and asked her if she could see.

"Dimly. You are a young man and have what seems to be a sword by your side."

Jack washed her eyes a third time, and asked her if she could see.

"Bravely, my young master !" said the witch. "Thanks to you. And now you shall have supper. Puss !"

And when she called him her cat came out of the back room, with his pipe in his mouth, and made a low bow to the strange young gentleman.

"Puss," said the witch, "go in the forest and catch us some birds for supper."

So the cat went out, and presently returned with a dozen of fat birds, which he spitted and broiled by the fire. And then he spread the table, and Jack and the witch sat down at it, and the cat waited on them ; and while they were eating he slyly made a meal himself. And, after supper, the cat showed Jack to a bed in the loft, where he slept soundly until morning.

The next day he offered the witch pay ; but she declined it.

“ Keep your money, Jack,” said she. “ Now that I have my eyesight and Puss is with me, we can both get along well enough. But I owe you something. Put this blue feather in your cap. Whenever you wave it and say ‘ Grow ! ’ a forest will spring up, a hundred miles long and a mile in width, for every time you wave the feather.”

Jack put the feather in his cap, thanked the witch, nodded farewell to the cat, and pursued his travels. By noon he came to a high range of mountains. The ascent was so steep that Jack bethought him of his first talisman, and turned the ring upon his finger, whereupon the mountain opened. Jack entered, and it

closed on him. The ring, however, emitted a steady light, and Jack pursued his way, the rocks still opening as he advanced, and in an hour's time he came upon the level country. Then he saw, about two miles off, a huge castle, five hundred feet high, which he went to at once.

Jack had never dreamed of a house so large, and it was of but four stories and the great door was over a hundred feet high. While he was looking at it, he saw some ladies sitting at a window. One of them beckoned to him, and Jack at once entered the great door, where he was met by seven beautiful young ladies—those he had seen at the window. They were bedecked with jewels. One had rubies, and one sapphires, and a third emeralds, and so on, and he saw that the youngest and most beautiful of all was almost covered with diamonds.

“Welcome, fair sir,” said the youngest. “Who be you who are come to the castle of Giant Grab?”

Then he told them his name, and asked them theirs in return.

“Sir Jack the Terrible,” said the young lady, “I am the Princess Diamond, the daughter of King Jewel, and these ladies are the Princesses Ruby, Sapphire, Emerald, Pearl, Opal, and Topaz, daughters of kings, and each has been stolen from her father by the Giant and held for ransom. He is away, and will not come back until nightfall. We will show you the wonders of the castle, and then you must away yourself, for he is too strong for you to fight.”

“I will look at all these wonders,” said Jack; “but on condition that you come with me afterward, for I am here to deliver you and I do not fear the Giant.”

To this they all agreed, and then they showed Jack over the castle. They went to the nine great treasure-chambers. One of these was filled with vessels of gold, of the most exquisite workmanship; another with like vessels carved from malachite and turquoise and lapis lazuli; and each of the others were filled with precious stones, one chamber for each kind. But what struck Jack most was the chamber of pearls; for every pearl there was as large as a hen’s egg.

"I will show you," said the Princess Diamond, "where he gets these."

So she took him to a chamber in which there was a golden cage, and in that a hen, with silver feathers.

"This hen," continued the Princess, "lays a pearl every day of the week except Sunday ; and on Saturday she lays two."

Jack and the Princesses all started off ; and the Princess Diamond took the hen from the cage and carried it under her arm. They all made their way along the road, and just when they reached the base of the mountain the seven Princesses gave a scream. Jack looked back. The Giant had reached home, and, having discovered his loss, was in pursuit of them ; but Jack turned his ring, the mountain opened, and Jack and the Princesses made their way safely through and went on.

The Giant, after thinking awhile on the matter, concluded to cross the mountain, which he did ; and there he saw Jack and the Princesses making their escape. He at once gave chase, and, being eighty feet high, was soon close upon them, when Jack took out

his feather, and, waving it three times, cried out: "Grow!" At once a great forest of pine-trees, grown closely together, three miles deep, sprang up in the Giant's path, and Jack and his convoy went on their way rejoicing.

The Giant was very much puzzled at this. The trees were so thick and strong he could not get through them, and, after running up and down for miles and finding no apparent end to the forest, drew his sword and began to hew a way. But this took him some hours, and by the time he had cleared a path it was nearly daylight, and Jack and the Princesses had arrived at the witch's house. Jack saw the Giant coming, and thought it time to end his pursuit. So he drew his sword, struck the earth with it three times, and wished the ground to sink suddenly for a mile under the Giant's feet.

There was a crash and a trembling, as of an earthquake, and the Giant, with a wild cry, sank into the chasm. Then Jack and the Princesses went into the witch's hut, where the old woman received them kindly, and the

cat went out and caught some birds for their breakfast.

When they had refreshed themselves, they all went on, and in due time came to the house of Jack's father. There Jack married the six elder Princesses to his six brothers, whom he sent off to their royal fathers-in-law, while he himself was married with the Princess Diamond.

After the wedding was over, Jack and his bride went to the Giant's castle, where they took possession of all the treasure. In course of time Jack succeeded King Jewel on the throne of Lubberland. King Jack and Queen Diamond were very much beloved by their subjects, and after reigning fifty years they died. Their son succeeded Jack as Jack the Second, who, being a warlike monarch, was known as Jack o' Clubs, to distinguish him from his father, who had been styled Jack o' Diamonds.

As for the hen that laid the pearls, she died after a few years, and, as she never hatched out a brood, I am sorry to say that the breed is extinct.

VIII.

Prince Labour.

ONCE upon a time, in the land of Bizarre, there reigned a King called Easy, who had two sons named Longsword and Quickspur. When they were nearly grown, the King lost his Queen, their mother; but in a year after married a Princess named Gracious, and had another son, who was called Labour. As Labour grew toward manhood he displayed tastes and habits quite different from those of his two brothers. Prince Longsword and Prince Quickspur were known as valiant knights, and won great renown in the wars. Prince Longsword was slow of speech and haughty in manner, and had no regard for the feelings of others. Prince Quickspur was affable and kind, but was roused to anger at the slightest opposition. Both these Princes were over the ordinary height, strong and muscular,

and disdained all that did not pertain to arms. Prince Labour, though bred a knight, loved the arts of peace. He became an adept in all kinds of mechanical work, was fond of woodcraft and farming, and was able to handle the axe and guide the plow dexterously. For all this, and for him because of it, his brothers felt the uttermost contempt. The people in general shared in this feeling, and thought it to be good for the realm that he was not the elder son, and, therefore, was not likely to succeed to the crown. For the country required a warlike, or a politic king, since it had the kingdom of Bricabrac on one side, and that of Rococo on the other ; and between these three powers there was always jealousy, and often war. King Easy was not a great warrior, it is true, but he was crafty, and made up by that and by his shrewdness in picking out the best general, for what he lacked otherwise.

One day, when Labour was twenty years old, the King spoke to his eldest son, and said :

“ You are now of middle age, and the heir

to my kingdom, yet you are not married. In order that you may form a fitting alliance, travel with a single servant as a private gentleman. Visit various kingdoms, and when you have found a princess suitable to wive, return and let me know, and I shall send an envoy and demand her hand for you from the king, her father. Go, and come back in a year and a day."

Prince Longsword set out upon his journey, with a single servant, as he was commanded. He travelled all day until he came to the border of Rococo, a narrow part of which projected in that quarter, and separated Bizarre from the land of Air. For it was to Air he was first bound, as the king of that country had a daughter, the Princess Charming, who was said to be graceful, beautiful, and of a sweet temper. At nightfall, when he and his servant were travel-tired, they came to a hut, at the edge of a forest, at whose door there stood an old and crooked dwarf. The Prince asked him where they could obtain food and shelter for the night.

"There is no other house but this for

twenty miles," replied the Dwarf. "If you will cut me some billets at the wood-pile, I shall cook you some supper, and give you beds. If not, you can go about your business."

"Varlet!" cried the Prince, "do you cut the wood, as befits you. As for me, if there be no other place than your wretched hut, I shall stay here, whether you permit me or not."

And so saying, he dismounted, and his servant did the same.

"I know you!" said the Dwarf. "You are not the fit heir to a crown, since you would invade the house of a poor man, and take by force what should be had of grace. You and your servant and your horses shall become four great rocks by the roadside, and so remain until I release you."

And the Prince and his servant and their horses were all changed as the Dwarf said.

When a year and a day had passed, and Prince Longsword had not returned, and no tidings were had of him or his servant, Prince Quickspar proposed to go in search of his brother; and, after some demur, his father

consented, but bade him return in six months and a day. This, Quickspur promised to do, and, taking with him a knight and servants as his companions, set forth.

On the evening of the day they arrived at the Dwarf's hut, as Prince Longsword had before, and as he had, Quickspur inquired the way, to which the Dwarf answered as before. Now Quickspur was not so arrogant as his brother, and, seeing that the Dwarf was old and weak, bade his esquire get enough wood ready for their supper. Their fare was scanty, and their beds of straw, but they managed to pass the night, and on the next morning they partook of a meagre breakfast. Then Quickspur, after he mounted, threw two silver pieces on the ground, and told his host that it was more than he deserved.

"You escape me!" cried the Dwarf. "Beware my sister!"

The travellers found their road full of obstacles. At times it was almost filled with rocks, and at others it passed over quaking bogs, into which they sunk at nearly every step; now it dwindled into a path they

could scarcely trace, and then widened out until it seemed no road at all. Some were for turning back; but Quickspur made them keep on, until at nightfall they reached another hut, where a little old woman stood at the door. Of her the Prince asked where lodging might be had.

"There is no other house but this for miles, sir," said she, "and this is mine. But you may stay on conditions."

"And what may those conditions be, high and mighty lady?" inquired Quickspur, whom fatigue and hunger had made ill-natured.

"That you will do the work I shall set you at in the morning; and without you promise me that, you may not enter my dwelling."

"And what is the work that you propose?"

"That you shall know when the morning comes."

"Insolent creature!" cried the angry Prince. "I shall remain, since there is no better lodging to be had; but I pay in coin, and not in labour,"

So saying, he dismounted, as did his followers.

“Insolent creature yourself!” shrieked the old woman. “Would you take possession because I am weak and you are strong? You and your companions, and the horses they have ridden, shall become a grove of blasted fir-trees, and so remain till I release them.”

And they suddenly became as she said.

When six months and a day had passed, and neither Prince Quicksur nor his train returned, Labour proposed to go in search of his elder brothers, whom, in spite of their scorn for him, he loved. But the King at first refused consent. “For,” said he, “I sent my elder son away, and he may be dead. I suffered his brother to go in search of him; and his fate, too, is uncertain. If I let you depart, and you return not, then I have lost all my children.” The Queen also refused her consent. But Labour pleaded so earnestly that they at length yielded.

“Better take a large troop of knights and men-at-arms to protect you,” said King Easy.

“Sire, my father,” said Labour, “a small

troop would insure disaster. To enter a neighbour's land with an armed force is war ; and war without a large army means defeat. Better suffer me to go alone, and unattended, and on foot ; for craft is better than force, and my weakness shall prove my strength."

At last the King consented, but bade Labour to return in a month and a day. Then the young Prince, clad plainly, departed on foot upon his travels. He took the same road his brothers had taken, and, like them, he came at nightfall to the home of the Dwarf, of whom he asked the question they had put, and received a like answer.

Labour looked at the Dwarf, and, seeing that he was weak and old, took compassion on him.

"I shall willingly do what you require, my friend," he said. "As you seem but little able to handle an axe, and I am expert at wood-chopping, and am young and strong, I shall cut you enough now for to-night, and in the morning sufficient to last you some time. I warrant you that two hours' toil will do the business."

At this the Dwarf looked well pleased. Labour soon made a pile of billets ; and, after he had been fed and lodged, he used the axe again the following morning, and fulfilled his promise fully.

As Labour was about to depart, the Dwarf thus addressed him : " My lord Prince," said he, " I know you well. You have overpaid for your food and lodging, and have earned wages for yourself. Take this key. It is old and rusty, and you can just trace the word 'Ingenuity' engraven on its shank. But it possesses properties which may serve you in your need. It will fit any keyhole, large or small, and open any lock. Take it ; and good fortune go with you."

Labour took the key, which he placed in his pocket, thanked his host, and went on his way. When he had departed, the Dwarf touched the rocks on the roadside, and, when they had resumed their forms, he bade Longsword and his servant return to the land of Bizarre, which they were glad enough to do. Meanwhile Labour kept on his way, and at nightfall came to the hut of the little old

woman, who gave him shelter on the same conditions she had proffered to Quickspur.

When the morning came and Labour inquired what work he had to do, the old woman gave him a great pile of silken thread, very much knotted and entangled. This he was told to untie and disentangle, and wind into a ball without breaking the thread itself.

"It is a troublesome task, good mother," said Labour, "and I fear it will cost a day's toil. But a promise is a promise, and I shall do my best."

Thus saying, he set diligently to work.

At first, the Prince made slow progress. It was so knotted and twisted that he had great difficulty in finding the end. When once he had obtained this the work grew easier, and as he toiled on the difficulty became less. So that, to his own surprise, it was not more than an hour until he had the whole in an unbroken thread, wound into a ball, which he handed to his hostess in triumph.

"There," said he, "is your ball for you; but as you seem to be old and poor, will you

let me leave you a few silver pieces to help you along?"

"No," was the reply, "for I do not need it. But do you take this silken ball, whose thread is made only in the land of Cathay, in the far East, and is known as the silk of Skill. When you desire to build a bridge over a river, or a chasm, all you have to do is to cast the ball from you toward the opposite side, when the gap will be spanned by a strong bridge, and the ball will return to your hand. Should you wish the bridge destroyed, all you have to do is to break the end of the thread."

Labour took the ball, thanked the giver, and resumed his journey. Presently when he had passed out of the land of Rococo, over a narrow strip of which he had travelled, and entered the land of Air, the character of the country changed. The road became smooth and regular; other roads ran into it from various directions; there were groves of trees, green meadows, murmuring streams, and gay flowers studded the roadside. But as he was striding along he heard the squeaking cry of some small animal in distress. Looking

down he beheld a large rat which had been caught in a snare set for rabbits. Labour had an aversion to vermin ; but the condition of the little animal excited his pity.

“ Good sir,” said the rat, “ have compassion, and free me. I have done no harm and was only looking for food, when this cruel snare caught me. Let me loose, and I may serve you.”

“ Not because you may serve me,” said the Prince, “ but since I do not like to see you a prisoner.” And he stooped down, and undid the snare.

“ I thank you,” said the little animal. “ Let me give you a caution in return. Five miles from this there is a castle close to the highway, and in that castle lives the Baron Grim, a robber-chief, who has fifty men-at-arms ; and with these he commits all kinds of crimes, and has thus far escaped punishment. But yesterday, as the Princess Charming, the daughter of the King, was riding in the forest, his band slew all her attendants and carried the lady off as prisoner. So carefully did they hide all traces that no one knows where

she is ; and the Baron has sent an agent to treat for her ransom, or rather to claim the reward offered for her return. I know it ; for I left the robbers' den this morning."

"Alas ! I am not able to cope with so many," said the Prince.

"It is not needed," responded the rat. "The Baron and all his troop set forth at daybreak on an expedition, and there is no one left at the castle but the old porter and the servants of the kitchen. If you care not to visit the castle, you can at east let the King know where the Princess is confined."

"True," said the Prince, "and if the robbers are away, may do more."

So Labour and the rat went on in company. When they had gone four miles further, they found a horse, who was limping along the road.

"Ho ! ho !" said the rat. "Are you lame, friend?"

"I fear I shall be," replied the horse. "A stone has wedged itself between my shoe and my hoof, and every step I take makes me feel worse."

"That may easily be remedied," said the Prince. "Hold up your hoof, and I will see if it may be removed with my dagger."

So the horse held up his hoof, and Labour speedily dislodged the stone. The horse cut a caper of joy, and then said to the Prince: "If you be tired, get on my back, and I'll carry you."

"No, thank you," was the reply, "I am able yet to walk; but I would be glad of your company."

So the three travelled together, and the rat told the horse about the captive Princess.

"If you go to the castle, I will linger around, and may be of use to you, at a pinch," said the horse.

Presently they came to Grim Castle, which stood in the centre of a large courtyard, wherein were the stables and offices, and all these surrounded by a high and strong wall. Around this was a deep and wide moat, filled with water, over which was a drawbridge. In the wall was a great gate, at which was a porter's lodge. The drawbridge was down, and the portcullis was up. The horse remained

outside grazing, the rat slipped in and ran to the castle, and Labour entered. Here he was met by the porter, who demanded his business.

"Could I get something to eat at the castle?" asked the Prince.

"They never refuse cold meat to strollers," said the porter; "and if you go to the kitchen the cook will give you something. But, hark you, young man! Go about your business when you have eaten, and while you eat ask no questions. The Lord Baron does not like listening ears and peeping eyes. He will return this evening to a great banquet which he gives his men-at-arms, and should he learn that you have behaved amiss, it will be the worse for you."

Labour thanked the porter and made his way to the kitchen, where Molda, the cook, gave him some cold meat and bread, and a measure of wine. Now Molda was a great gossip, and plied him with all manner of questions about affairs without, and Labour, by saying little and listening much, soon drew from her all he wanted to know. He learnt

that the Princess, while she was treated well, and served by one of the women of the castle, was held alone in the western tower under lock and key. Labour lingered on, still talking and listening, until it was near night. The day was hot, and Molda was drowsy, and at length, after some yawns and nods, fell asleep in her chair. Labour thereupon silently made his way to the western tower, and, unlocking the door, was soon in the presence of the Princess Charming.

No sooner had he seen her than he fell violently in love with her. He told her his name and station, and that he had come to deliver her. He proposed to go on to the Court of her father, and return with force enough to overcome all resistance. While they were talking they heard the sound of a trumpet, and knew that the Baron and his followers had returned. So Labour locked the door again, and made his way to the kitchen, where he found the cook awake and preparing to dish up the banquet.

When the Baron and the rest sat down to meat, the porter informed his master of the

stroller who had come to the castle, but had not gone away. So Labour was sent for, and when he was in the presence of the Baron, the latter enquired his name and business.

“I am Prince Labour,” was the reply; “and I am travelling in search of my elder brothers, who came this way long since, and have not returned.”

“A very pretty story that,” said the Baron. “Princes do not travel alone, and beg cold victuals. You are probably a spy. I shall not stop my supper to examine you now, but shall keep you safely until morning. Should I find your story false, you shall die. As for your rank, I would as soon hang a Prince as a peasant. Bind him, and keep him safely.”

So, in spite of his protest, the Prince was bound with cords and thrust into a dungeon, while the Baron and his men began their feast.

All that night the Prince could hear dull sounds above that told him the revellers were carousing. Toward morning these died away, and then the Prince heard a rustling sound beside him, and next the voice of the rat.

“Keep still,” it said, “while I release you.”

So the rat gnawed away at the cords and presently cut them through.

“Now,” said the rat, “do you unlock the door, take the Princess, and escape.”

“But how shall I pass the closed portcullis or let down the drawbridge?”

“No need for either,” replied the rat. “There is a wicket door in the wall, opening on the moat, and there is a boat moored there which will carry us safely over. As the horse will be there, I shall guide you to the stables, where you may get a saddle and bridle, and a pillion for the Princess. And now let us go.”

Labour unlocked the dungeon door with his key, and then, seeking the tower, awakened the Princess. The two descended, the rat running on before. The Prince did as the rat told him, and the three, after emerging from the wicket door, crossed in the boat, and found the horse waiting. Him the Prince saddled and bridled, and with the rat in his pocket, and the Princess on the pillion behind, started on his escape.

They took the nearest by-road, and, when out of hearing of the castle, the horse struck up a lively trot. Daylight began to break, when they found themselves at the edge of a wide and deep rift in the rocks, that seemed to extend on either hand for miles.

“Alas!” said the Princess Charming, “our retreat is cut off.” And as she spoke, they could hear a dull sound in the distance, which showed that the Baron and his men had awakened, and were following in sharp pursuit.

“The ball!” said the rat.

“The ball!” said the horse.

“The ball!” cried the Prince, and cast it before him toward the chasm.

The ball kept on, unwinding itself as it went, and as it unwound, up rose from the rocks on each side a wide stone bridge, which joined in the centre. Over this they all rode in safety to the opposite side; and then the ball of Skill rewound itself and came back to the hand of Labour. Then the Baron and his men appeared in sight, pressing along furiously. Some of the men-at-arms, startled at the sight of a bridge where none had been be-

fore, paused ; but the Baron urged them onward, and they crowded together and passed on. No sooner had they reached the centre, than Labour snapped in twain the end of the silken thread. In an instant the bridge parted with a loud crash, and the Baron and his followers, falling to the rocks below, perished miserably. Then, after a little pause, Labour threw the ball over, the bridge rose and joined again, and they all recrossed.

In a short while they arrived at Castle Grim. Here they beheld a cloud of dust upon the road, and from this there came a train of knights and men-at-arms. This was a party headed by the King of Air, who was scouring the country in search of Princess Charming. The daughter was soon in her father's arms. The King, when he heard what Labour had done, thanked him, and invited him to his Court. Just then a cloud of dust was seen in the opposite direction. This came from another strong force, commanded by Princes Longsword and Quickspar, and headed by King Easy, who was in search of his youngest son. The two kings met ami-

cably ; and the whole went together toward the capital of Air.

After some days of feasting, King Easy proposed his eldest son, Longsword, as a husband for the Princess Charming. The King of Air replied that nothing would give him greater pleasure than an alliance with the House of Bizarre, but he left it to his daughter to choose among the three Princes. The Princess, with a blush, declared that her preference went with her gratitude, and, if her father approved, Prince Labour should be her choice. And to this King Easy assented.

On the evening of that day, Prince Labour went to the stall which he had ordered for the horse, and whither the rat had gone, ostensibly to regale itself upon corn, that he might thank his faithful friends. But both horse and rat had disappeared, and in their stead was a gnome, clad in green and gold, and a fairy, in a blue silken robe.

“ Prince,” said the fairy, “ I am she who presided over the birth of thee and thy brothers, and to whom the care of the three was transmitted. The gnome here is my friend ;

and in all dealings with mortals we are firm allies. I was the rat, and he the horse. I was the little old woman, and he the dwarf. We have tested thee and thy brothers, and found thee to be the most worthy. Fulfill thy destiny ; be, in time, a great king ; but never fail to remember to cultivate the arts of peace, without forgetting those arts of war that may be needed to preserve peace, foster industry, and preserve content."

With that, the fairy and gnome vanished, and Labour saw them no more.

In due time Prince Labour and Princess Charming were married ; and, on the death of the King of Air, they succeeded to the throne. Labour was a great king. The land was rich ; for men from all countries build castles in Air, and spend much time there, and it is thickly peopled. And Labour never parted with the key of Ingenuity and the ball of Skill ; and, having these, he was able to defy opposition, and to secure prosperity and content to his loving people.

IX.

Strongarm.

ONCE upon a time a blacksmith lived in the land of Odd, and he had a son named Strongarm. Now, although Strongarm had been taught his father's art, and had become a very expert workman, and could fashion all things in iron and steel, yet he was not fond of his work, and much desired to turn his hand to something else. In course of time his father and mother both died, to his great sorrow. After mourning for them some time, he sold his smithy, and all the tools save the large sledge-hammer, which was called Smiter, and with which he would by no means part; for he said it was a weapon he knew how to handle, while he was quite ignorant of the use of a sword.

Close by the smithy there stood a huge wood, extending for many miles into an un-

known region. In the land of Odd all kinds of trees that grew in different lands and different climates were found to flourish—the chestnut growing by the side of the bread-fruit, and the walnut along with the palm. All kinds of wild beasts were found therein; and it was said to be the dwelling-place of fairies, gnomes, ogres and giants, so that no man had dared to enter it. But Strongarm, being young and strong and reckless of danger, determined to explore its recesses in search of adventures. So, shouldering his great hammer, on a fine Spring morning he set forth, to learn what would come of it.

Strongarm made his way among the trees, and through thickets, and over rocks, and across streams, until, at length, he heard the piteous cry of some one in distress. He hurried forward, and saw a great lion which had overthrown a dwarf, and seemed about to devour him.

“Ho! Ho!” cried Strongarm, advancing close to the lion. “None of that now!”

The lion, still keeping one paw upon the dwarf, growled defiance.

"Oh! you would, would you?" said Strongarm; and, raising his hammer, he beat in the lion's skull with a single blow. The great brute rolled over dead, while the dwarf, after Strongarm had shaken him a little, recovered his senses and arose.

"Thank you, Master," said the dwarf. "You have done me a good turn, and I owe you two. Please to hire me for your servant."

"I can serve myself," said Strongarm. "But what is your name, and what can you do?"

"I am Fire," replied the other. "Whenever I breathe strongly I melt glass and earth and rocks, and when I blow I cause flames to break out, even at the distance of many miles."

"Ah, ha!" cried Strongarm. "You may be useful. I hire you as a servant, at a penny a year."

"I am content," said the dwarf, and followed his new master.

Strongarm went on a mile further, when he heard a faint cry of distress, which suddenly ceased. He pressed on until he came where

a tiger, having seized an old woman, was about to worry and eat her.

“Ho ! Ho !” cried Strongarm, going up to the tiger. “None of that now !”

The tiger snarled, and spat like a great cat, but kept one paw upon the old woman.

“Oh ! you would, would you ?” exclaimed Strongarm, and dealt the tiger such a blow on the head with his hammer that the animal fell over dead, and the old woman, awakened from her swoon by his fall, arose, and shook herself to see if she were alive.

“Thank you, kind sir,” she said. “I must pay you for that. Let me be your servant.”

“But who are you, and what could you do for me ?” inquired Strongarm.

“I am Water,” she replied. “When I breathe hard I raise a mist, and when I blow there comes a flood.”

“Ah, ha !” exclaimed Strongarm. “You may be of use, also. I hire you for my servant, at a penny a year.”

“I am content,” cried the old woman ; and, joining the dwarf, the pair followed their master.

Strongarm went a mile further, and heard a weak cry of distress. He rushed on, and found a great, fat, brown bear, with a boy he was about to eat up.

“Ho ! Ho !” cried Strongarm. “None of that now.”

But the bear, without taking his paw from the boy, looked up and growled.

“Oh ! you would, would you ?” and he knocked the bear on the head without delay. When the beast fell back, the boy arose and clung to his deliverer.

“Let me go with you, as your servant,” he said.

“I have two already,” replied Strongarm, “and two are company, and three are not. Besides, who are you, and what could you do, anyhow ?”

“My name is Air,” said the boy. “When I breathe hard I raise a breeze, and when I blow there comes a tornado.”

“Ah, ha !” cried Strongarm. “That is the best of all. I hire you as my servant, at a penny a year.”

“I am content,” said the boy, and he joined the dwarf and the old woman.

"Now," said Strongarm, "what with walking through the woods, and wielding Smiter here (and there are ten pounds of him) I am hungry. If we could only cook some of this fat bear !"

"That is easy," said the dwarf, who gathered leaves and twigs and fallen timber into a pile, and blew on it gently, when it burst into a flame.

"Good !" cried Strongarm. "But we want bread."

"That is easy, and a dessert after dinner, too," said the boy. "Here is a bread-fruit tree at the right, and a date-palm at the left." So he blew gently upward, and a shower of bread-fruit and dates came down.

"Better !" cried Strongarm. "But where is the drink ?"

"That is easy," said the old woman ; and she blew gently at the foot of a rock hard by, and a crystal spring burst forth, and carved itself a sandy basin, and overflowed, and ran along in a little stream, into a deep ravine, leaping from rock to rock, and seeking for a mate.

So they sat down, and ate and drank and made merry.

"Now," said Strongarm, "that we are rested and refreshed, it is a pity there is not an adventure before us; for Smiter is quite ready for work, and so am I."

"Easy enough," said Fire, the dwarf. "Five miles from this is a great river, and in that river is a large island, and on that island, stands the capital city of the Kingdom of Curlecue. It was once a great and thriving place, where every one was busy and happy; but now it is all quiet, and the inhabitants, from the king down to the little boy who peddles penny pies in the street, are in a state of drowsihood. So still are they that the spiders have covered them with cobwebs, and the dust has settled over them inches deep."

"And how did all that happen?" demanded Strongarm.

"The wicked enchanter, Sloth, who is an ogre and a wizard, and has a castle on the river, ten miles above the town, aspired to the hand of the Princess Sweetlips, the King's only daughter, and was refused. So when the

Princess was betrothed to the young Prince of Lubberland, on the very day they were to be married the ogre threw the spell of drowsiness over them and built a great wall of glass around the place, so strong it can not be broken, and caused a wood to grow around that so thick that the birds can not fly through it ; and there it is to be until the spell be broken."

"You, Air, can uproot the forest and shiver it all to fragments," said Strongarm. "And you, Fire, can melt the wall. But what then?"

"Then the spell will be broken, should any one who is the only son of the seventh son of a seventh son, go boldly forward to where the King sits upon his golden throne, and tweak the royal nose."

"Ah, ha!" cried Strongarm. "I am an only son, and my father was the seventh son of the seventh son, and I will undertake the adventure."

So they set forth, Strongarm at the head, and the boy and the dwarf behind him, and the old woman bringing up the rear, and soon reached the river. There was no boat ; but

they made them a raft of fallen limbs, in which they all embarked, and Air breathing, a breeze arose and wafted them over to the island. Here Air began to blow against the wood, and a tornado arose which soon tore the trees from the earth and reduced them to fine splinters. Then Fire began to breathe, and at once the glassen walls softened and melted and ran down into the ditch outside; and when this had all cooled Strongarm and his companions marched into the city.

Such a time as they had to make their way ! There were cobwebs across the streets, and at the doors and windows, and in all the rooms, and from one drowsy inhabitant to the other; and every step made by the visitors raised a cloud of dust. Cobwebs and dust everywhere around, before, and behind them; and clouds of dust filling their eyes, ears, mouths and nostrils. But they persevered, and entered the King's palace, and made their way to the presence chamber, where everything was in readiness for a grand wedding, and where the Prince of Lubberland stood, holding the hand of the Princess Sweetlips. There, too, sat the

King on his throne, but concealed partly by a great cobweb extending from the tip of his nose to the arms of the throne ; and this Strongarm tore away. There sat his Majesty, half asleep, with his head thrown back, and his nose protruding. It was such a beautiful nose to pull, so long, so thin, and with such a lovely rosy hue, that Strongarm made no ado about it, but reaching out his right hand, gave it a vigorous tweak.

In an instant every one awakened, and the guards, seeing a stranger so close to the King's royal person, presented their spears, and the Prince and nobles drew their swords. But Strongarm beat their weapons down by a sweep of his hammer, and they fell back in dismay.

"What does all this mean?" cried his Majesty, while the courtiers began to shake the dust from their clothes.

"Simply this," answered Strongarm, as soon as he could stop sneezing with the dust, "that I have broken the enchantment and released you from the spell of the ogre."

"Ah! the ogre!" cried the King, in terror.



“ THERE SAT THE KING ON HIS THRONE, BUT CONCEALED PARTLY
BY A GREAT COBWEB.”

“ He has threatened, if the spell were broken, to bring here a great army and put us all to the sword. I hear his trumpets now ! ”

“ That is my business ! ” cried Strongarm, and rushed out-of-doors, followed by his companions, and by the King and Court.

And, surely enough, there was the ogre disembarking from a hundred great barges, at the head of an army a thousand strong, which formed upon the shore.

“ I shall go to meet them with Smiter,” said Strongarm.

“ That is my business ! ” cried the boy, Air. And he began to blow. A tornado struck the advancing army, killing and destroying the soldiers, and none escaped save the ogre, who got into one of the barges and shoved it from shore.

“ That is my business ! ” cried the old woman, Water. And she began to blow. The white foam rose on the river, the water-courses at the side rose and filled it, and it became a great flood, which swept the barge off, and overturned it, and drowned the ogre, and that was an end of him.

“ His castle should be destroyed,” said the King.

“That is my business!” said the dwarf, Fire. And he began to blow. Then they could see the towers of the ogre’s castle, which stood upon a high hill, ten miles off, break into flames; and, in a little while, the roof fell in, and the building became a mass of blackened stones and gleaming ashes.

The King politely expressed his thanks to Strongarm, and asked what he could do in return for the service given. And when he learnt Strongarm’s trade he created him Count Hammerbearer, and assigned him apartments in the palace, and made him the court blacksmith. As all he had to do in the office consisted in taking the salary while some one else did the work, Strongarm discharged the duties very well; and was very happy ever after. He married one of the maids of honour, and his great grandson is the court blacksmith to-day, and has the privilege of bearing Smiter, which is carefully preserved in the family, before the King on all state occasions. What became of Air, Fire, and Water is not recorded; but they, doubtless, were well cared for.

X.

The Boy who Lost his Head.

ONCE upon a time there was a little boy named Peter. He was as bad as a healthy little boy usually is, and besides being full of mischief, was very careless. Thus it was that one day, having gone into the woods to play, and having bumped himself two or three times against low-hanging boughs and drooping branches, he unscrewed his head, placed it on a stump, and continued his play without it. This he could well afford to do, since the play he was engaged in, the stopping up of a ditch by filling it with sods and stones, required no thought, and his head was of no especial use to him just then. Presently he finished his toil, having done enough to stop the drainage, and throw the water back upon the standing grain in the field, and ruin the crop; and, the sun having gone down, he concluded that he

would go home. So he went to get his head, but found it was gone. He looked everywhere, and searched until it was quite dark, and at last was forced to go home without it.

At supper, his father inquired what he meant by coming to the table without his head, and he was forced to acknowledge that he had lost it. Such a time as there was, to be sure. Peter was forced to go to bed without his supper, for his teeth were in his head, and his head was not on his shoulders, and without teeth the food could not be chewed, and without being properly chewed food leads to dyspepsia, and dyspepsia brings the family doctor to smell the top of his cane, and order nasty medicine, and the patient gets no better, and keeps on getting so, and the boy's mother frets herself, and the boy's father loses patience, and goes out, slamming the door after him, and many evils follow.

The next morning the whole family turned out to seek for the head, but without avail. Then they inserted an advertisement in the Num Skull Gazette in these words :

Lost, Strayed, or Stolen—a little boy's head. Has dark eyes, brown hair and regular features, and answers to the name of Peter. Whoever shall bring it back to Peter, senior, No. 2,976 Absurd Avenue, at the northwest by north corner of Impossible Street, shall receive Ten Cents reward, and the thanks of the loser, and his afflicted family.

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The prospect of getting so much money caused great crowds of people to seek diligently. The farmer left his plough, the blacksmith his forge, the capenter his workbench, the pea-nut woman her stand, and the milkman his cans at the pump, and joined in the search, each one as he sought thinking what would he do with the money when he got it. But it was all in vain. No one could find the head, nor any trace of it. It really seemed as if Peter must do without a head. To be sure they could have bought one at the artificial head-makers in Ridiculous Lane; but the artificial head, having no brains in it, was a thing of show merely, and of little use to the wearer.

By good luck, another head was found. Peter's uncle, having done something wrong,

had been elected a member of Congress by way of punishment, and had gone to take his seat. As an ordinary head was of no use there, and as the new member wanted to be quite equal to his fellows, he had bought a wooden head for official use, and a brand-new India-rubber conscience, and left his own head and his old conscience at home. Nothing better could be done than to screw Uncle John's head to Peter's neck; and thus Peter made shift, while a new and vigourous search was made for his own.

Peter at first was proud at having an old head on his shoulders, especially as the head had a fine, glossy moustache, and a huge pair of mutton-chop whiskers. But it gave him the appearance of being a dwarf of middle-age, and, go where he would, people stared at him. Then he found that his tongue was expected to utter such words as befitted his apparent age, and that his conduct was obliged to be equal to it. He dared not play marbles, or hop-scotch, or any of the games indulged in by boys. He was continually asked questions about things he did not understand, and was

expected to act and talk like a man, which, being a boy of ten, he found to be impossible. He could not stand it, and not being able to stand, he moved, and so ran away, at the first chance.

After Peter had gone, they caught a band of rogues who had a den in the forest, where they stored stolen goods, and among the rest of the plunder found there was Peter's missing head. This was restored to Peter's parents, who put it upon a shelf to await their son's return.

In time Congress adjourned, and Peter's uncle came home. He asked for his head, which he now had use for. They were forced to let him know what had become of it, and he grumbled a deal. But the best he could do was to take Peter's head, and screw it on his own neck, and make shift with that till his own should be brought back to him. He determined to go in search of his runaway nephew and make an exchange as soon as possible. So he put a paper collar and a bunch of tooth-picks in his pocket and set off to look for Peter and his own head.

In the meanwhile Peter had travelled through the forest until he came to the high road which led to Nowhere from the great city of Impossible, where the cleanly inhabitants washed their houses once a week, and then turned them upside down for a day in order that they might drain and dry. This high road he followed until he came to a village, and there he found a number of boys at play. And when they saw Peter they called out—"Oh, what a queer dwarf!" And they threw sticks and stones at him, and as he ran they followed him, all pelting him as they went. At length he outran them all and escaped. But he was so scared that he ran on, and ran and ran, until he fell, bruised and bleeding, at the gate of a garden. There the gardener's daughter came out, and took pity on him, and washed his face with soap and sand and a scrubbing-brush, and poured molasses on his wounds, having no oil, and wrapped his head in a door-mat, and was very kind indeed. And then he thanked her, and made a polite bow, and she made a curtsy, and so they parted.

Then Peter pursued his journey. And he went, and he went, and he went, until he came to a by-road that was narrow and shaded and cool, and he preferred to take that. He went along that road for miles without seeing a house, and grew very hungry. At last he came to a great wall more than a hundred feet high. There was a door, about thirty feet high and twelve feet wide, but it was shut. As Peter stood there, wishing for a nice piece of bread and butter with peach jam a half inch deep, he felt himself lifted in the air by an enormous hand, and held in front of a face two feet and a-half long, with a pair of eyes four inches in diameter. Then the huge lips before him opened, and a voice that sounded like a sharp peal of thunder said—"Oh, papa! see what a pretty doll I have; and it's alive too. It winks its little eyes."

Then a voice deeper and stronger yet roared out—

"It is one of the dwarf people, the Minnikin-mannikins. He has strayed out of his own country. They make nice eating, these little fellows, baked in a pie. If you run a

spit through him, and broil him over the fire, you'll find him a delicate tidbit."

"I'd like to keep this one alive, papa," said the other voice.

"Very good, my child; just as you please—he is only a few mouthfuls anyhow; but he seems very plump and tender."

Peter was scared at this. He didn't want to be baked in a pie, and he felt sure it would hurt him to run a spit through him. But Monstrolinda, the giant's daughter, settled the matter by putting him in an iron cage that hung twenty feet from the floor, and feeding him with pound-cake and raspberry jam until he felt sick. And then he remembered how he had caught a chipping-bird once, and put it in a cage, and made it eat until it died, and wondered if he were to be crammed to death too.

Monstrolinda was very kind and attentive to her captive, and never forgot to feed him more than two or three days in the week, so that he was pretty well off; but he did not like the cage a bit, and would have liked to get out. But this was not so easy. Even if

he could unfasten the door of the cage, the jump of twenty feet would break his bones.

Neglect after some days favoured him. Monstrolinda set the cage down on the floor to feed Peter, and had opened its door, when a noise in the courtyard attracted her attention. She ran to the window. It was a quarrel between two servants. What they said and did was so funny that the girl stood and laughed at them for a half-hour, and when it was all over she turned to the cage, and found that Peter had gone.

Peter had slipped out when she went to the window, and made his way slowly down the big steps of the stairway, each of them over three feet high, and got out of doors, and hid himself in some tall grass at the foot of a tree. He soon heard them searching for him, but they finally gave him up, and he heard Monstrolinda crying, and the old giant saying that he had probably been carried off by the cat. When night came Peter made his way off, and went back by the road he came, and found a hidden spot where he went to sleep.

Next morning he travelled on until he met

a party of armed men with dogs. These proved to be King Nobody of Nowhere, with his men, out in the woods hunting the kobjugler. The kobjugler was a very ferocious brute, which did great damage in the country by devouring the persimmons. The King was very much pleased with Peter and offered him the position of court-dwarf, at a salary of nothing a day, and he to find himself. But Peter did not care to find himself, but to find his head, and told the King so. Then Peter started on his homeward journey, and the King and his Court went to hunting the kobjugler, whose track of *d-e*, *de*, *v-a-s*, *vas*, *devas*, *t-a*, *ta*, *devasta*, *t-i-o-n*, *shun*, *devastation*, was marked by the seeds of many persimmons.

The uncle of Peter had had a time nearly as odd as that of his nephew. He had set out in the opposite direction. He had hoped to find Peter in Somewhere, and he set out for the city of Quolimbo, which, as every one knows, is the capital of that country. On his way he made very close inquiry of all he met, if they had seen or heard of a boy, with a man's head on his shoulders, but could gain

no news of Peter, which as the boy had gone the other way, was not to be wondered at. But Peter's uncle kept on until he came to the city itself, which was beautifully built in the clouds, and which had a town hall, made of sugar candy, and a great museum, filled with bunches of birches, rattans, taws, leather straps, mother's slippers, and other instruments of torture used for little boys in the dark ages, and a hospital for decayed toymakers, and dungeons for cruel schoolmasters, and a fountain of lemonade in the principal streets, and a great many other curious things. And Peter's uncle went to the museum and the hospital, and the town hall and the fountain, and to all other places to look for Peter. As he did not find him or hear of him, he concluded that he would go back; and he did so, without any other thing worth speaking of. And it so befell that both got back at the same hour and the same minute of the same day, and met each other. Thereupon they exchanged heads, and each got his own again, and they came into the house just as dinner was ready, and sat down and ate with the rest.

As for Peter, he grew up to be a man, and when his uncle died he became his heir. As his uncle had spent all his money while he was alive, Peter did not profit much ; but his uncle had made his will, and where there is a will there is a way, and the way that Peter took was to work for his own money, which is the best way after all. And when he became of proper age, he was married to the gardener's daughter. And at the wedding a most remarkable fact was made known. The gardener's daughter, that every one thought was a gardener's daughter, did *not* turn out to be a princess in disguise, but was a real gardener's daughter after all, and her name was Molly Milligan. And the couple lived to be old, and were happy all the days of their lives, and Peter used to tell his children all about when he lost his head, and lived in a cage at the giant's house, and met the King of Nowhere, when he was out trying to hunt the ferocious kobjugler in his native jungle.

XI.

Timbertop and Betsian.

ONCE upon a time in the land of Kommon-toise, which is bounded on the north by the Ahpelpye Mountains and on the south by the great Sea of Le Monaide, and which is between the Kingdom of Jaknyphe, on the one side, and the Empire of Smash on the other, there lived a wooden man, named Whittle. He was a maker of road-cloth, and in the course of his business employed a number of people, including several young girls, who diligently spun the street-yarn of which road-cloth is made. Whittle had grown rich at his trade. He had a perpetual order from the government for an indefinite quantity of the best quality of his wares for making the great highways of a kingdom ; while all the inferior stuff was sold at ever so much per yard to the authorities in the small towns and

villages, to be rolled out into lanes and by-ways. So rich did he become that he bought a large castle, which stood in the centre of a wide park and was surrounded by a forest of animal trees. Those trees which would have been curious here caused no wonder there, for in Kommontoise all animals, except man, who is whittled out of wood, grow upon trees, each in a pod. When the beans are ripe the pods burst open, the animals fall to the ground, and at once begin to feed. Whittle's park contained none but the thriftiest trees, which yielded him yearly a fine crop of horses, cows, and sheep. The park was kept in fine order, though a few rat-bushes and mouse-vines grew in the fence-corners; but were prevented from increasing by the cat briars that sprang up around them. The place was the pride of Kommontoise, and its fame extended to the Kingdom of Jaknyphe, and even to the Empire of Smash, where the boozyies grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run up-hill, and the poljorums bloom twice a year.

Now, Whittle had no children, to inherit

his riches ; therefore he adopted a nephew, called Timbertop, whom he declared to be his heir. Being desirous that the young man should be settled, and at the same time anxious to add to his nephew's future fortune, he picked out a wife for Timbertop in the person of Betsian, the only child of X. K. Vaytor, who was the next richest man in the kingdom to Whittle himself. Besides being a great heiress, Betsian was a beauty, being made of the finest curled maple-wood and highly varnished, and having her hair painted a pleasing sky-blue. Being an heiress, it was thought she was as good as she was beautiful. But Timbertop took a great dislike to her. He had never seen her, and, so far as she was concerned, cared nothing ; but his pride was hurt at the connection, for he had been told by those who knew that her father had laid the foundation of his fortune by peddling keyholes. Now, it was true that the elder Vaytor had made a start in that way ; but so soon as he had gained enough capital had gone into more important business, and he had at last secured the monopoly of the man-

ufacture of post-holes, which necessary apertures he made by millions, and sent, packed in sawdust, to the farmers all through the country. And this Vaytor was of good family, being the grandson of L. E. Vaytor, who was first cousin to Lord Hoist; while everybody knew that Timbertop's mother was a Woodsaw, and the Woodsaws were very ordinary folk. When Whittle learnt of his nephew's obstinacy, they had high words together. The uncle called his nephew a blockhead, and the latter jammed his moonshine cap on his head, drew on his bobbinet boots, and, wrapping his blotting paper great-coat around him, strode off in a pet to the Empire of Smash, where the boozies grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run up-hill, and the pol-jorums bloom twice a year.

It happened that Betsian had as deep-rooted an aversion to Timbertop as Timbertop had to her. She had never seen him; but had heard that, at best, he was a common fellow, made of pine and fastened together with pegs, and without any paint or varnish upon him. This was very unjust on her part; for Timber-

top was really made of the finest rosewood, French-polished to the highest degree, and put together in the most workmanlike manner. Then she knew all about the Woodsaw connection, and she not only looked down upon the Woodsaws, all and singular; but had often sneered at them, and supposed he knew of it, and that he saw she saw Woodsaw in him. But her father was firm on the matter and declared she should be wedded to Timbertop, on the following Monday morning, at ten o'clock precisely. To show he was in earnest, he ordered the wedding-cake to be made of hickory sawdust and baked in a cold oven; and set the mantua-makers to work upon a wonderful wedding-dress of shingle-shavings trimmed with poljorum blossoms. Thereupon Betsian knew that this meant business. So she locked herself up in the garret and cried. But, finding that tears would not mend the matter, she picked up her parasol, let herself out of the window in a basket, and ran away toward the Empire of Smash, where the boozies grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run uphill, and the poljorums bloom twice a year.

Timbertop went on his way in a raging passion; but by the time he got over the boundary line of Kommontoise and Smash, felt his wrath grow less and his hunger grow bigger. He made up his mind to take things easy, and, as a step toward this, to look out for supper and a night's lodging. Presently he saw in the air, about forty feet above him, a number of men engaged in building a house. Now, in Smash they always begin to build their houses at the chimney-top, from whence they gradually work downward until they reach the ground, when they finish by laying the cellar wall. The workmen had only got as far as the garret, and were too high in the air to talk with him. He had no time to wait until they had built down to him, so he sought the information he wanted elsewhere. Pursuing his journey, he came across a man upon a pair of high stilts. He knew that this was a poet, since all poets get on stilts in Smash, as they are sometimes said to do in other countries. He civilly asked the way to an inn. The poet told him to walk one mile, two furlongs, and a perch further; then to turn to

the right and walk three furlongs and a rod ; then to turn to the left and walk a mile and six yards, when he would come to two roads, and one of these, either that to the right or left, he wasn't sure which, would lead him to some men who were gathering boozies from the bumly-bushes, and they would point out the road that would lead him to the town of Takemin, where there were inns lying about loose everywhere, and he could put any of them he chose in his pocket. Timbertop asked him to give him plainer directions ; but the poet said it was not proper so to do in the Empire of Smash, where the boozies grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run up-hill, and the poljorums bloom twice a year.

Betsian, who had taken a by-way, finally reached the high road. She was very tired when she got there, and would have gone back, but she was ashamed to do so ; and then she had lost her way, and was not sure whether she were going somewhere or coming back from that place. When she came to where they were building down the house, she did not stop to ask anything ; but went

on as quickly as she could, lest the chimney-top and the garret and the men at work should fall down on her and damage her parasol. But when she came to where the poet was walking about, and grinding his verses out of an old coffee-mill which he carried, she asked him if he knew of a young ladies' seminary that wanted a lady professor who could teach the pupils the art of doing nothing diligently, together with shell-work and the use of the globes for keeping gold-fish. And he answered, "Not any for me, thank you!" and went on turning the crank of the coffee-mill. And when she repeated the question, he answered, in a gloomy tone of voice: "Follow your nose." And when she asked of him if it made any difference which way her nose pointed, he gave no reply; for she had already asked two questions, and to answer a third was against the rules of fashionable society in the Empire of Smash, where the boozy grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run up-hill, and the poljorums bloom twice a year.

Then Betsian pouted and went on. And when she had gone about a mile she found a

young gentleman in a brown study and in a ditch. She awakened him out of the one by asking him the same question she had first put to the poet; but she could not get him out of the other, because he had broken his leg. So soon as she discovered his misfortune and had observed he was a dark-complexioned rosewood young gentleman, French-polished to the highest degree and put together in the most workmanlike manner, she ran away to the house of Dr. Chopper, the great surgeon, and implored his help. The benevolent Doctor came at once and examined the case. After smelling the top of his cane and elevating his eyebrows, he said it was a compound and common something-or-other fracture of the Os What-d'ye-call-it, and that there was no remedy left but a-m, *am*, p-u, *pu*, t-a, *ta*, t-i-o-n, *shun*. Then and there Dr. Chopper he trimmed off the broken member with a Barlow knife and smoothed the stump with a rasp, and, sending to the limb-shop, had a new leg bought and brought and fastened on. And then he wrote a prescription in these words: "*Recipe Gelatinis*

equo quantum parvum, et Aquæ pumpibi quantum sufficit. Misce. Fiat solutio cum calore. Signa. Apply to the wounded part when it won't stick, frequently and oftener. CHOPPER, M. D." And when Betsian asked him if that were Latin, he answered, " Doctor's Latin, my dear " ; and when she asked him what it meant he answered " Glue " ; and when she inquired why he could not have said so in plain language, he said no more, for to answer three questions in one day is not the custom of the faculty in the Empire of Smash, where the boozyies grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run up-hill, and the poljorums bloom twice a year.

Nevertheless, the pegs held and the glue stuck, and the two new friends started together on their journey to no place in particular which they were very anxious to see. And while travelling Betsian asked the name of the young gentleman whom she had drawn out of the ditch, and Timbertop asked the name of the young lady who had done him such service ; and when each found out who the other was they both fell in love in the

most astonishing manner. And Timbertop proposed that they should go back and get married. And she said : " Let's." But just then they heard a great weeping and wailing and sobbing. And Timbertop was so astonished that he said : " Goodness !" And Betsian was so confounded that she said : " My !" For they saw coming toward them a long procession of women and children. And when they inquired of one of these the cause of their trouble, they were told that just before them was a big rock, and on top of that rock was a big castle, and in that castle was a big Ogre ; and the Ogre had carried off all the men in the neighbourhood and was going to cook and eat them. " And," continued the woman, " what *ever* shall we do ?" Then Timbertop, like a gallant young rosewood gentleman, French-polished to the highest degree and put together in the most workmanlike manner, proposed to go and forthwith kill the Ogre, and release his prisoners ; which all the women and children very much approved. And he asked Betsian to be present and see how the thing was done. So the

two ascended the big rock, and knocked at the big door of the big castle ; and when a big porter came to the door, Timbertop politely requested him to give his compliments to the big Ogre, and ask him to come out at his earliest leisure and be killed. And the big porter said he would tell his master without fail ; but, for his part, he did not know how it would be, since big Ogres did not always like to be killed in the Empire of Smash, where the boozies grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run up-hill, and the poljorums bloom twice a year.

When the big Ogre was told of the desire of Timbertop, he said he would be only too happy to oblige ; but that Mrs. Ogre and the little big Ogres were waiting for their supper, and he must come out and gather chips to cook the men in the pot. So he came out of the big gate of the castle, a great giant, with boots that reached up to his neck and a hat that reached down to the ground, and saw Timbertop, who was strutting up and down, and Bet-sian, who looked at him admiringly. Now the big Ogre was very short sighted, and

in his hurry had forgotten his barnacles ; so when he saw the rosewood young gentleman and maple young lady he thought them two chips that were tossed hither and thither by the wind, and, gathering them up, cast them under the great cauldron among the other wood and applied a light. Before they could say "Jack Robinson"—which they did not say, because they had never heard of Jack—the blaze was around them. But they made up their mind not to get burned into ashes, and so leapt out, and ran out of the big castle, and down the big rock, and along the road home, where their friends were very glad to see them, indeed. And so Timbertop and Betsian got married, and lived to be old, and inherited all the money of Whittle and Vaytor, and the monopoly of the manufacture of road-cloth and post-holes, and used often to entertain their children by telling them of their adventures in the Empire of Smash, where the boozies grow on the bumly-bushes, the rivers run up-hill, and the poljorums bloom twice a year.

XII.

Dunnohoo.

ONCE upon a time there was a poor boy who lived in a little hut, in an obscure lane, in the great city of Dunnoware, in the populous country of Cloudland. His mother had died when he was very young, and his father, who came to Cloudland from a far distant place, brought up his son until he was twelve years old, when he too died, and left Dunnohoo (for such was the boy's name) to shift for himself. As the people in Dunnoware never concern themselves about what does not concern them, no one offered to take care of the young orphan, and so he managed to take care of himself. His father had left behind a few silver pieces, some books, and property of apparently no worth ; but Dunnohoo contrived by his own efforts to make an honest living. He had been carefully taught

to read and write, and upon this the boy built the rest of his education. He had also been taught to do whatever he did thoroughly, to get all he might earn and to take nothing that he had not earned, to be honest and to speak the truth. He toiled whenever he could get work ; he weeded gardens, ran on errands, and turned his hand to many little jobs so handily that he was in great request. At length he rose to be a courier, and proved himself to be so trustworthy that he never lacked employment. In the morning he went to the great square in front of the King's palace, where all the couriers were to be found, ready to do his duty when called on ; and, when his day's labour was over, returned to his hut, ate his frugal meal, read an hour or two in one of the few books he had, and then went to bed, to rise the next day and do as he had done the day before. But there was one book which he could not read, and which he kept in a safe place. It was a small volume, bound in gilded vellum and studded with pearls, and it was written in characters which Dunnohoo could not under-

stand. His father had told him that some day it would be read, to his great benefit ; but he must wait. "Be patient," said his father ; "for the hour will come and the man."

Dunnohoo did not live by himself always. When he was twenty years of age, he picked up a small yellow dog in the street. It was gaunt, lean, and appeared to be half starved. It fawned upon him ; and, taking pity upon it, he brought it home. No one claimed it, and, as it improved in condition, it grew very fond of him. So when he went abroad in the morning he left Brant (for such was the dog's name) to take care of the place ; and the dog and his master became very good friends.

One day Dunnohoo had gone to the public square, as usual ; but it was near noon before any one had occasion for his services. In the morning a carriage containing a nobleman and a young lady had been driven to the royal palace, and Dunnohoo had seen them enter. He knew the Lord Scowl well enough, having seen him at a distance before that ; but the beautiful young lady was a stranger. So he asked of Lord Scowl's footman, who

told him that the lady was a princess, named Darling ; and that her father had been killed and she driven from her land by a great giant, at the head of an army of giants, who had overrun the place. And this giant, King Grum, was a foot taller than any of his soldiers, being thirty-one feet high. He was different in appearance and nature from his subjects, for he had arms of iron, legs of lead, a body of silver, and a head of gold, while his lips were made of two huge rubies, and his eyes of two immense diamonds, the size of goose eggs. And this princess had come to the Court of Cloudland, and sought the protection of Lord Scowl, who had been ambassador to the king her grandfather and was seeking from King Shadow an army to overcome Grum and his forces and restore her to the throne of her fathers. And Dunnohoo, when he heard that, began to dream with his eyes open. And he saw himself at the head of a strong force, attacking and slaying King Grum, and then married to the Princess Darling, and clad in cloth of gold, with a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand. And he said

to himself: "She is doubtless a beautiful damosel and high-born, and would scorn to touch my hand; and yet she shall be my darling before long, and I shall kill King Grum, and give her the rubies of his lips to wear on her head, and I will have his two diamond eyes for my fortune."

As he stood there, thinking thus, there came out a page from the palace, with a letter to be sent to my Lord Scowl's house by a trusty hand, and as Dunnohoo was known to be a trustworthy courier, it was given to him, with orders to deliver it to the Lady Griffiniska, his Lordship's daughter, and to bring back what he should receive. So he made his way as he was told; and received a small casket of gold, with instructions to give it to no one but Lord Scowl himself. So he returned with it, and was taken in to where Lord Scowl and the Princess were, and handed the casket to the former. He received a broad silver piece for his pains, to which the Princess added a small gold coin, and then Lord Scowl noted the messenger for the first time.

"Pray, young man," he said, "who are you and what is your name?"

"I am a courier, my Lord," he replied, "and am called Dunnohoo."

"And what is your father's name?" continued Lord Scowl, who seemed to be troubled at his sight.

"My father has no name," replied Dunnohoo, which was a polite way they had in Cloudland of saying that a man was dead.

"But what name had he," pursued the nobleman, "when he was with you here?"

"He called himself 'Nameless and Landless,'" was the answer; "and he told me never to fear, for the hour would come and the man."

Lord Scowl shuddered at these words, and asked him where he lived and made him describe the exact spot. Then he dismissed him. But the Princess said to him, as he was going:

"Good-bye, Dunnohoo. I wish for the hour that shall see the downfall of King Grum, and the man to overthrow him."

And to this he replied: "Never fear, The hour will come and the man."

Whereupon Lord Scowl shuddered again, and this time he looked angrily at the courier ; but he turned away, without a word.

All that day, wherever he went, Dunnohoo thought upon the Princess Darling, and thought about the time to come when he should restore her to her own, after having slain King Grum and defeated his army.

But that night, when he went home, he was met by his yellow dog, whom he had left locked up in the hut, and who came out all bruised and bloody, as though it had been beaten by some cruel hand. He hurried on, and found his door open. On entering the hut, he saw that intruders had been there and that the place had been searched. Everything was tossed about in confusion, and his little hoard of money had been taken from its hiding-place, but not carried off. Those who had been there had not stolen anything. He closed and barred the door, and, when he found he was alone, removed the hearthstone and drew from their concealment his book of gold, and a box, which he opened, and found there a velvet cap, a sword, and a pair of boots,

which had been given him by his father, on his death-bed, with an injunction to keep them until the hour came. And then he sat down to reflect and to try to guess why his place had been visited. The more he thought the less he could make of it. He then occupied himself in washing his dog and dressing his wounds. And then he said :

“Ah ! Brant, if you could only speak, you could tell me something.”

The dog opened his mouth and replied :
“Of course, I could, and I can.”

Dunnohoo sprang to his feet in amazement. Brant had never spoken a word before, nor had he led him to suppose he had the power of speech. So he could only stammer out :

“Is it possible that you can talk?”

“Not only possible, but actually so,” said the dog. “The fact of the matter is that I am not a dog at all, but the Djinn Djim Kro, who have been condemned by the King of the Djinni to take this shape and keep it until the hour came and the man, and the Giant Grum shall have been slain, and the Princess

Darling is to be married. This is the hour. Now you have arrived at your twenty-first birthday; and the house has been searched and the doom out. And I can tell you why they came here, and why they will come to-morrow."

"And I should like to know who did it, and why?" exclaimed Dunnohoo, who had begun to recover his courage.

"It was done by the order of Lord Scowl."

"But why?"

"Because he wanted the boots and the cap and the sword and the book of gold; for he knew, when you told him you were the son of Nameless and Landless, and gave him the words 'The hour will come and the man,' that you must have them."

"How did he know that?"

"Because he is a wicked sorcerer, and it was through his arts that your father was a banished and disinherited man; and he would have had them long since, but that your father was kept from his search by the King of the Djinni, who sent me here to invoke your pity and to serve you,"

“ But, if these things be of such value, why were they not made to serve my father? ”

“ Because they could be only used when the hour came and the man. The hour is here and you are the man ; and if you be guided by me you shall recover your father's possessions, and overthrow Grum, and marry the Princess, and reign over all broad Wonderland.”

“ What must I do? ”

“ Take these talismans and me and set out for Wonderland, where the people, who are in hiding from the giants, await your coming.”

“ It is a year's journey,” said Dunnohoo.

“ You have only to put on the boots and walk and wish to be there, and you will find it to be not over a minute's travel. Now go to bed and to sleep, and I shall awaken you bright and early in the morning.”

“ Since you know so much, perhaps you will tell me what is written in the book? ”

“ If I were back to my state as a Djinn I could tell you, for we Djinni know everything ; but a dog cannot read. You must wait,”

And with that the dog lay down on the rug, after turning around three times, and curled himself into a ball, with the tip of his tail at the end of his nose, and was asleep in an instant.

The next morning Dunnohoo was awakened by the barking of Brant, whereupon he drew on the boots, put the cap on his head, girded the sword to his side, thrust the book in his vest, and, taking the dog under his arm, began to walk ; and the minute after found himself in a strange country.

On a thousand hills there were a thousand castles, made of gold and studded with jewels ; but one hill had a castle bigger and stronger than the rest, and that was the castle of the King. And the rivers ran up-hill, and the trees grew with their roots upward, and the fishes perched in the trees and chirped, and the cows in the pastures sang songs, and the sky was red, and the grass blue, and Dunnohoo knew that he was in Wonderland. The roads were all of golden sand, and Brant, who had been set down when they arrived, trotted alongside of his master.

“ I don't know how it is with you, Brant,” said Dunnohoo ; “ but as for me, I would like some breakfast.”

“ Whistle !” said Brant.

Whereupon the young man whistled, and a roast pig emerged from a thicket, with a knife and fork in his back, and a plate of apple-sauce in his mouth, which he set down at the feet of Dunnohoo. The pig squeaked out : “ Breakfast ready.” Dunnohoo needed no second invitation, but sat down ; and, seizing the knife and fork, cut off several slices, a proceeding which the pig seemed rather to enjoy than otherwise. Looking around, the traveller saw the down-growing branches of a bread-bush, on which fruit was a hot roll, ready buttered ; and he helped himself to these, tossing morsels now and then to the dog.

“ This is very comfortable, Brant,” said Dunnohoo ; “ but it's rather dry eating, after all.”

“ There is a bottle-vine around this bush,” was the reply.

And so it proved, with several of the bottles

ripe and filled with a most delicious liquor. It was not wine, nor honey, nor milk, but something that reminded one of all three, and Dunnohoo pronounced it to be good. When he had drank enough, he asked Brant what he should do next.

"That cap on your head," said the dog, "is a wishing-cap; but its power is limited to granting three wishes during a year. If I were you, I would wish to be a giant for twenty-four hours, taller and stronger than King Grum."

"Good! I wish that!" said Dunnohoo.

As he said this, he felt himself growing taller and taller, and stouter and stouter, until he shot up so far in the air that the tall trees around him seemed to be but bushes and the ends of their bare roots so many threads. The sword by his side and the clothes on his back increased in size with his body. And, to talk with the dog, he had either to stoop or to take the animal up and place him in the palm of his hand.

"Now," said Brant, "wish for a civil war among the giants."

“Good! I wish that very much!”

At once there was a great noise, as of fighting—the neighing of horses, the blare of trumpets, and the clashing of swords. Climbing the nearest hill and looking down into the valley beneath, Dunnohoo saw two armies of giants engaged in battle. On one side was King Grum, and on the other, a great giant clad in steel armor. After a desperate battle, the rebels were defeated, with great slaughter.

“Now is your time,” said Brant.

“Mine!” exclaimed Dunnohoo, in dismay.
“How am I to fight so many?”

“Depend on your sword!” returned Brant.
“When you have once drawn it, it will slay any and all you will to be slain.”

Thereupon Dunnohoo advanced, and as he waved his sword the heads of the giants began to drop, right and left, rapidly. But no sooner had King Grum seen this new enemy than, without waiting further, he cried out “The hour has come, and the man!” and ran off, never stopping until he reached his own castle, where he barred and bolted the great gate. In the meanwhile the sword

worked back and forth on the field, until all the giants were slain. Then Dunnohoo made for King Grum's castle ; but found that he could not enter.

"Here is a difficulty we did not foresee," said he.

"All right !" said Brant. "All you have to do is to——"

"Do !" interrupted the young man angrily. "After all our doing, here is Grum entrenched in a place so strong that no one can drive him out. I wish a fire would break out in his jack-boots, and melt down his leaden legs for him."

"Now you have done it !" exclaimed Brant. "You've wasted your last wish, and can't have another for a year."

Dunnohoo looked rather blank at this, but there was no help for it.

"I am tired, anyhow," he said, "and need rest. So I shall lie down here and have a good night's sleep ; and, as you are a watchful fellow, you can keep a sharp lookout and see that Grum doesn't run away before morning."

"No danger of that," replied Brant. "His legs have all melted down before this, and the lead has hardened into two lumps, and he can't get along on the stumps."

So Dunnohoo picked out the softest rock for his pillow and lay down on the bare ground, and fell into a peaceful slumber; while Brant lay beside him, with his head between his paws and his tail curled over his back, keeping one eye open, while he went to sleep with the other.

Next morning, bright and early, Dunnohoo arose and walked around the castle, but could find no way to enter. Nor could he see any one. In truth, King Grum was all alone; for the day before he had taken all the servants, and even the women, as recruits in the battle, and they had been all killed. As for the children, they were all off at boarding-school. And the giant himself was quite a dwarf now, not over fifteen feet high; for his long leaden legs had melted down to a pair of knobs, and he could only wobble along by means of his hands and arms, and was in a very gloomy state of mind about it.

Dunnohoo was about to go off in despair, and had already cut the roots off a twenty-foot tree and trimmed it down for a staff, when it felt so heavy that he was obliged to drop it. To his wonder, he found that he had shrunk back to his original size, and was only five feet eleven inches in height. The time of his wish had expired.

"Now you can overcome Grum readily," said Brant.

So, instructed by the dog, and not without some labour, Dunnohoo moved the staff to the door of the castle, and cut notches in it, about a foot apart. Then he raised it so that its top stood against the castle door, just at the huge keyhole, which was big enough to admit a man's body, and into which, being a giant no longer, he could crawl. Then the dog ran up after him, and crouched in one of the wards of the lock, while Dunnohoo drew up the notched staff and let it down on the inside. Then they both got down into the entrance hall. There they found another great door, and that was bolted and barred and there was no keyhole. But the dog dis-

covered a rat hole, about two feet wide, at the bottom : and through this Dunnohoo crept, sword in hand, and Brant after him.

There was the giant, sure enough, looking gloomily at his leaden knobs ; and the moment he saw them he asked :

“ Has the hour come ? ”

And Dunnohoo answered, drawing his sword :

“ And the man ! ”

The sword leaped out and cut off the head of King Grum, and the diamond eyes rolled out, and the ruby lips fell off, and Dunnohoo put them both in his pocket.

And then—whether because it was published in the morning newspapers or because some courier informed them I do not know—all the principal people of the kingdom came out of the places where they had been hidden since the coming of the giants, and offered Dunnohoo the crown of Wonderland, which he accepted in a neat speech.

But just at this time they heard the blowing of trumpets and the beating of drums, and, on looking out of the window of the castle, they

beheld a large army, sent by the King of Cloudland, with Lord Scowl in command; and he proclaimed in a loud voice that Dunnohoo was a traitor and usurper, and that he held the crown and the kingdom against the Princess Darling, who was the rightful sovereign of the realm.

Whereupon Dunnohoo went forth, sword in hand, and proposed to do battle in behalf of his right; and the sword leapt forth and took off the head of Lord Scowl, and that was the end of him. Then Dunnohoo offered his hand and fortune to the Princess, who dropped a courtesy and said "If you please," and that matter was settled.

Then Brant changed his form suddenly to that of the Djinn Djim Kro, as black as a raven; and, taking the book from Dunnohoo, he read aloud from it, in a clear voice and minding all his stops, how King Terrible, who reigned over Wonderland, at the prompting of Lord Scowl, who was then the Cloudland ambassador at his Court, had set aside the succession of his son, Prince Toilsome, in favour of the younger brother, Prince Silky,

the father of Darling, and banished the elder son, with his child ; and how the latter, who had taken the name of Nameless and Landless, was told by a venerable hermit, with a long beard and a red nose, that all would be righted when the hour came and the man. And then he hailed Dunnohoo, by his proper name of Useful, as the king of all broad Wonderland.

And King Useful the First and his Queen Darling reigned over the country, and the Djinn Djim Kro was his prime minister, and the land prospered and many good laws were made ; and, among the rest, it was ordered that all yellow dogs found wandering without a master should be taken care of and be called by the name of Brant. And that is all.

XIII.

Roleybole and his Comrades.

ONCE upon a time, in the great Kingdom of Impossible, where the trees grow with their roots in the air and their branches in the ground; where the little dogs wear ribbons in their noses, and the cats are shod with golden thimbles, there was a little boy called Roleybole, who went forth to seek his fortune. And he travelled until he came to a place in the road where a boy who had a fiddle sat upon a stone.

Roleybole said to the boy: "Play me a tune."

But the boy answered: "I must first consider of that. For whenever I play on this fiddle I raise the wind, and that brings the clouds, and the clouds open and the rain comes down. If I were to play, we should both have wet jackets presently. Besides, I

am seeking a fortune, and first of all a comrade ; for without I have a comrade I can do nothing."

"What is your name?" inquired Roleybole.

"Rackum," was the answer.

"Well, then," returned Roleybole, "you shall be my comrade, and fiddle when I desire. It must be a good thing to be able to raise the wind and make the rain come down. I am seeking my fortune, also ; and when I get it you shall have half."

To that the other agreed, and they travelled, and they travelled, until they came where two roads met ; and there stood a boy who had a coat four times too large for him.

"Where is that coat going with that boy?" inquired Roleybole.

The boy answered : "That coat can go anywhere with the boy, if the boy ask it to go anywhere. I have only to take it off, and place it on the ground, and sit on it, when it will carry me—and whoever else I please—where I please. And if I take it off and hold it over my head, it will make me as large a

pavilion as I choose. But I am seeking my fortune and a comrade ; for without a comrade I can do nothing."

"What is your name?" asked Roleybole.

"Phlihi," was the answer.

"Very good," said Roleybole. "You shall be my comrade, and carry me where we want to go, and shelter us whenever we desire to avoid the rain and sun. It must be a fine thing to bear your sail on your shoulders, like a nautilus, and carry your house on your back, like a tortoise. I am seeking my fortune, too ; and when I get it you shall have half."

To this the other agreed, and they took the right-hand road, and they travelled, and they travelled, and they travelled, until they came to where three roads met ; and there they saw, lying on the ground, a boy, who had a large leathern bag.

"What have you in that bag?" asked Roleybole.

"Pease," was the answer. "But they differ from all others ; for when I open the bag each pea becomes a soldier, ready to fight for me

to the death, and when I rattle the empty bag each soldier jumps into it, and becomes a pea again. But I am seeking a fortune and a comrade ; for without a comrade I can do nothing."

"What is your name?" demanded Roleybole.

"Woppletybang," was the answer.

"All right," said Roleybole. "You shall be my comarde, and let your soldiers fight for me when I need them. It must save money if the whole army can be put into a bag at meal-time. I am seeking my fortune, too ; and when I get it you shall have half."

To that the other agreed, and they took the middle road ; but had not gone far before the road dwindled to a horse-track, and then to a foot-path, and then gave out entirely. Just at this place there stood a little girl, clad in red, white, and gold, whom everybody could see was the sweetest and most beautiful Princess in the whole world ; and she had with her a white greyhound, with black ears and red eyes.

"What are you doing here?" inquired

Roleyboley. "And who are you, anyhow?" which was very rude of him.

And the Princess answered: "I am the daughter of Lollipop, King of Konfexionari, who was driven from his kingdom by the usurper, Bigboi, and who died in exile; and this is my dog, Fang. And I have eaten nothing since morning but nine Bathbuns, and four cranberry tarts, and a poundcake, and six doughnuts, and five crullers, and four apples, and thirty queencakes, and a pound of gingernuts; and I am *so* hungry, I don't know—what—to—do. And I want a champion to fight for my kingdom; for I can't, and Fang here, he can't. And I wish I was a girl that sells matches, I do."

"What is your name?" asked Roleyboley.

"Caramel," was the answer.

"That will do," said Roleyboley. "I will be your champion and restore you to your kingdom. I am seeking my fortune; and I am to give half of it to each of my comrades and keep the rest for myself, and what is left over after that you shall have."

To this the Princess agreed. And then

the whole five would have set out to pursue their travel; but it had grown dark by this time and they had lost their way.

Then they looked north, and saw nothing.

So they looked south, and saw the same.

Next they looked east, with the same result.

Finally they looked west, and they saw a light. So they travelled westward, until they came to a hut; and Roleybole knocked at the door, which was opened by an old woman, who had long white hair, a bent back, with a nose and chin that met each other, and only one eye, which was at the top of her forehead. But none of them were afraid of old women, for each of them had a grandmother; and Roleybole at once inquired of her if they could have supper and shelter for the night.

The old woman answered: "If you can each be content with a biscuit and a mug of water, and to lie on a bed made out of one straw, you can have food and lodging."

And they all said they would be content.

"But," added the old woman, "as the little

girl here is the sweetest and most beautiful princess in the world, and is so hungry, she shall have a red-cheeked apple besides."

So they went into the cottage, where the old woman gave them what she had said ; and also gave Fang a red herring, with black pepper on its tail. And when they had finished the meal she showed them to their beds, where they all slept soundly, except Roleybole, who complained that he had rolled off his straw several times.

The next morning they rose with the sun, and the old woman cooked them some oat-meal porridge for their breakfast. Then Roleybole gave his hostess a penny, to pay for what they had received. The old woman looked around for a halfpenny change ; but Roleybole, as the champion of the sweetest and most beautiful princess in the world, disdained to receive it, and told her to keep it all and buy a gingerbread horse, on which she might ride for exercise. Then he asked the Princess Caramel how far it was to the Kingdom of Konfexionari.

"About ten thousand leagues, or a mile,

maybe," said the Princess; "but I don't know exactly, and I am *so* hungry."

Then Roleybole said: "Here is a chance for you, Phlihi."

So they went to the door of the hut; and, Phlihi having spread his coat on the ground, they all sat down on it, with the Princess and her dog Fang in the middle. Then Phlihi said:

"It flies!
We rise,
To man's surprise."

With that the coat rose in the air with them, and in less time than you could say "Bumly-bee-with-his-tail-cut-off" they were landed in the country where the rivers ran lemonade, and the sands were white sugar, and the rocks were gingerbread and hard-bake; and they all knew they had come to the Kingdom of Konfexionari. And about a half mile off they saw a huge castle of rock-candy, which was the royal palace, where resided the usurper, Bigboi.

"Now," said Roleybole, "let us have the little jokers in the bag, Woppletybang."

So Woppletybang opened the leathern bag; and all the peas popped out, and each pea became a soldier, in a light-green uniform and a great peas-blossom plume. And the soldiers formed into four ranks, waiting to demolish their enemies and looking quite fierce.

Now, when Bigboi saw the soldiers, and recognised the sweetest and most beautiful princess in the world, he ordered out all his army, which was made of sugar-candy, and put it in array. And it certainly was the most terrible and gallant army that ever was seen.

The centre of the force was made up of the Mintstick Brigade—long, slender fellows, in snow-white uniforms and a red ribbon arranged spirally around each; the Sugar-Plum Division, composed of rough-looking veterans, in reddish uniforms; and the Chocolate-Drop Brigade, short, squab men, clad in brown from head to foot. On the right the Nougat Battalion marched, ten thousand strong, in a brown uniform, flecked with yellow and white. The left was made up of four brigades of Lemon-Lumps, Gum-Drops, Kisses, and Vanilla Sticks. A strong reserve



"PHLIHI TOOK OFF HIS COAT AND HELD IT OVER HIS HEAD."

of Taffy troops brought up the rear; while hovering on each flank were numbers of Brandy-Drops, acting as cavalry—spirited fellows and capable of doing a deal of mischief.

The action commenced with a discharge from the artillery of the enemy—huge bonbon cones, loaded to the muzzle with sugared almonds and comfits, that did great execution. Roleybole, who, as general, was forced to keep himself out of harm's way, stood with Princess Caramel and his comrades at a safe distance, and saw his troops falling, with great chagrin. Suddenly, however, one of those great ideas that strike the minds of eminent commanders at the proper moment occurred to him.

“Phlihi! A pavilion for our forces and ourselves!”

Thereupon Phlihi took off his coat and held it over his head; when it became a huge pavilion, covering all the pea soldiers, and Roleybole and his comrades, and the most beautiful princess in the world.

“Rackum! Rain for the enemy!”

Thereupon Rackum took his fiddle, and, uttering the words

“Come wind, come rain
Wet 'em again !”

began to play ; and as he played the wind arose, and clouds gathered over, and rain fell, and the water played sad havoc with the forces of Bigboi. The red ribbons of the Mintstick Brigade were all washed off ; the Sugar-Plum Veterans were speedily smoothed ; the Chocolate-Drops were all melted into one confused mass ; and the rest of the forces presented a mere lump of many-colored stuff, that stuck to the ground and couldn't move an inch. Bigboi saw the condition of affairs, and, mounting a white sugar-candy steed, tried to ride away. But the torrent carried him right into the raging waters of Lemonade river, which closed over him, horse and all, and nobody ever saw him any more.

Then Phlihi took down the pavilion, which changed back into his coat ; and that he put on again.

“You have your kingdom back,” said Ro-leyboley.

"Yes, I see," said Caramel. "But it is near dinner-time, and I am *so* hungry."

"No matter," said Roleybole. "I am a geologist."

"A-ge-ol-er-gist! What is that?" asked the Princess. "Is it good to eat?"

"A geologist," said Roleybole, with dignity, "is one versed in the science of geology."

"And what is geolergee?" again queried the Princess.

"Geology," said Roleybole, "if you will permit me to correct the pronunciation of your Royal Highness, is that part of natural philosophy which investigates the formation and structure of the earth, as to its rocks, strata, soil, minerals, organic remains, *et cetera*, and the changes which it has undergone. For which see Bakewell, quoted in Worcester's dictionary, quarto, second column, page six hundred and thirteen."

"Dear me!" said Caramel, "how learned you are, to be sure." And her eyes grew larger with admiration. "Bakewell is a good name, you know; but I can't eat rocks, and I am *so* hungry!"

“But,” replied Roleybole, “I see in yonder rocks a natural deposit of hard gingerbread, and I propose to quarry out enough for our dinner.”

So they all set to work immediately, and drilled holes in the gingerbread rock, and blew it to pieces with giant powder, and gun-cotton, and nitro-glycerine, and dynamite, and a number of other things, whose names were harder than the rock itself, until they had enough broken to pieces; and then they all made a hearty dinner, and washed it down with copious draughts from Lemonade river.

Roleybole and the most beautiful princess in the whole world were married, and ascended the throne of Confexionari; and Rackum, Phlihi, and Woppletybang became great lords of the Court. What happened to Fang I don't know and I don't care; for I fail to see what business he had in the story. As for the old woman in the hut, unless she has died or has removed to some other place, she probably lives there still. But King Roleybole and Queen Caramel lived long and were happy, and then died of a good old age.

XIV.

The Green Gnome.

ONCE upon a time, there was a peasant named Peter, who lived at the edge of a wood, in the interior of Germany. Having had the good fortune to save the child of a great noble from drowning, the father not only gave him a large purse of money, but also the privilege of choosing four morgens of ground to be his and his heirs' forever. Peter, having his choice of the place, picked out a beautiful bit of hillside, partly in grass and partly in rocks, suitable for a vineyard, and upon this began to erect a small house. As there were a number of fragments of rock lying around, more than enough for a house, he determined to make a deep cellar there, not only because it would keep the house above it dry, but since it would make a proper store for the wine which he proposed to make from the

grapes he intended to grow. This cellar he began to dig to a great depth ; but he had scarcely gone three feet below the surface when he was waited on by a little copper-faced man dressed in a suit of green leather, who thus addressed him :

“ Peter, has the Baron yet given you the deed for this ground, or are you at liberty to change the place ? ”

“ I have not yet formally made my choice,” replied Peter, “ unless the digging be considered so. But why do you ask ? ”

“ I am the King of the Gnomes,” returned the other. “ I wish you to go a little farther to the right from where you now are. You are just over my palace, and if you dig so deep as you propose, you will certainly break a hole in my roof, and tumble into my garret, which is not a suitable place for a wine-vault.”

“ I don’t wish to do that,” said Peter, “ so, if your Majesty will deign to point out where I should go, I will take that place in preference to this.”

The Gnome King thereupon pointed out the proper place, and said : “ Dig your cellar

here. It will shorten your labor ; for at three feet you will come upon a deserted treasure chamber of mine, whose door is walled up, and to this you are welcome. You will find a few scattered gold pieces, which the careless porters spilled while removing the treasure, and also a large rusty key, which I advise you to secure. It is a master-key, opening any lock, large or small, and may serve you at need."

And then the Gnome King, with a friendly smile, sank into the ground.

As the King had foretold, Peter dug his way into a deep and spacious vault, where he found a hundred gold pieces and a rusty key, all of which he put carefully away. He finished his cellar, and then his house, and planted his vineyard and his garden, all of which flourished. After five years he became very tired of his loneliness, and began to look around him for a wife. As he had prospered very much in the meanwhile, he looked above his rank in life for a mate, and his choice fell upon the Lady Theela, the only daughter of a decayed gentleman who was the younger son

of a noble family, though exceedingly poor. The lady herself, though of noble birth, favoured the suit of the handsome and well-to-do vine-grower ; but when her father heard of the proposal of Peter, he was quite incensed at the lover's presumption. But as Peter had been very liberal of his first vintage, sending a quarter cask of the best as a present, the Herr von Mangelberg couched his refusal in courteous terms.

"You know, Master Peter," he said, "although so far as looks and merits go, you are made for a princess, yet Theela is Von Mangelberg, and that, though a younger son, I am possessed of the title of Baron ; therefore, as you are not noble, there are certain little matters to be disposed of, before you can become my son-in-law."

"And will your Lordship tell me what they are?" asked Peter.

"In the first place," said Von Mangelberg, "you must have at least a hundred thousand florins, for having no good blood yourself, you must be able, if you ally yourself to a noble house, to gild your pedigree. In the

second place, you must have a large estate, with a handsome house, and a retinue to match, since, though my daughter is poor, she has had all the advantages of society through my rich kinsfolk, and would pine to death if deprived of it. And in the last place, it is necessary that you should obtain a patent of nobility, in order that your descendants may be noble on both sides of the house. When you have complied with these requisites, the hand of Theela is yours. Till then, you must excuse me if I decline to discuss the subject."

Peter went home in a melancholy state of mind. By diligence, aided by a happy stroke of fortune, he might obtain the gold and ground; but how was he to cause the Emperor to ennoble a peasant and vine-grower? He sat down in his kitchen, with a bottle of wine before him, and began to reckon up his capital, and wonder how many years it would take to swell his store of florins to the sum required. As he sat thinking he felt there was some one near him, and on looking up, beheld his friend and benefactor, the Gnome King.

"Do not despair, friend Peter," said the gnome. "Part of what you require, I can furnish; the remainder must be had from another. Here is a purse, containing a single florin. No matter how often you take it out, another will take its place—the purse being inexhaustible. Go to the Court of the Emperor; take with you the rusty key which you have stored away, and the packet of papers that belong to your father. You will find how to use both in good time."

With these words the Gnome King stamped on the floor, through which he sank. Peter would have thought it a dream, had not the purse, whose qualities he put to an immediate test, proved the interview to be real.

The next morning, Peter, having the papers and the key in his pouch, and clad in a new woollen suit, started, staff in hand, for the chief city of the empire, where he arrived after a three days' journey. Once there he found it no easy matter to gain speech with the Emperor. He spoke to the porter of the palace, who roughly ordered him off; and to the gay pages who ran to and fro, who only

jeered him. At length, very much out of heart, he sat down on a stone by the gate, and, when he reflected on his wearisome journey and the little end to which it had been made, his eyes filled, and though he was a grown man, the tears ran down his cheeks.

Just at that moment the Lord High Chamberlain, the Count von Albeon, came along, and seeing the young and handsome peasant in grief, asked him the cause of his trouble.

"I cannot get to speak with the Emperor," said Peter.

"Why do you wish to speak to him?" demanded the Count.

"I want him to make me noble, so I can marry the Lady Theela von Mangelberg."

"Oh!" cried the Count. "That is a very modest request; but I fear it would not be granted, unless indeed you were a skilled locksmith, and could open the doors in the north crypt that have been closed from beyond man's memory, and defy all efforts to unlock."

"Oh! if that be all!" cried Peter, who be-thought him of his master-key. "But will that make me noble?"

“His Imperial Majesty has promised to whoever succeeds, if peasant or burgher, a patent of nobility; and if already noble, a title one grade beyond that he bears. But if he fail, then, if he be noble, to be degraded one rank; if a peasant, to have forty lashes, well laid on.”

“But I shall not fail.”

“I hope not, for the penalty must be met. Yet it is a great stake to play for possibly. All that the vault contains, and it doubtless has something of value, is to reward the successful man.”

“It is the patent of nobility! I care most for,” said Peter. “Let me try.”

The chamberlain took him to the Emperor's private cabinet. Peter expected to see the Emperor seated on a throne, clad in purple velvet, with a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand. Instead of that he saw a kind-looking old gentleman, in a silken dressing-gown, seated in an easy chair, smoking a long pipe, and occasionally signing papers handed him by a secretary.

“Well, Count?” asked the Emperor.

"Here is a man, your Majesty, who thinks he can pick the lock."

"Another!" cried the Emperor. "That will probably make the third whipping this week. I rather like the looks of this man, too. His face seems familiar to me. Let him try, under the usual penalty. Stay! I think the morning's business is through, and I may as well witness his success or failure."

Down to the crypt went the three, accompanied by the secretary, who was as anxious as his master to learn the result.

"Now," said Peter, as he brandished the rusty key, "let us understand one another, Herr Kaiser. If I open the door, I am to be noble, and have all that lies beyond those doors."

"Even so, friend, all that the place contains, and one step beyond your present rank."

Without farther ado, Peter thrust the key in the lock, and turned it. With a great clang the bolts flew back, and the doors opened.

The Emperor was startled. On a number of shelves, ranged in order were the old crown jewels of the empire, that it was supposed had

been stolen a century before—the heavy crown, loaded with diamonds and rubies ; great collars of pearls and emeralds ; sceptres studded with sapphires and opals ; and crosses, necklaces and bracelets in great numbers, and of almost incalculable value. The velvet cushions on which they rested, were moulded and half rotten, but the jewels were unhurt.

Amid the burst of rejoicing the Emperor looked grave. “Of course, we must keep our word,” said he ; “and the treasures are yours. But the crown jewels must remain with the crown. What will you accept as their ransom.”

“If it please your Majesty, what is needed to marry the Lady Theela, is a hundred thousand florins, a fine estate, and a patent of nobility. I have no trouble about the first two. Make me noble, and keep the crown jewels.”

“Nay,” said the Emperor, “that were a small ransom. Who was your father, and where do you come from?”

“I do not read nor write, Herr Kaiser,” replied Peter ; “but here are some papers

that belonged to my father; and it may be they will tell you more than I can."

The Emperor glanced over them, and then read parts of them with care.

"The good Baron von Iderstein!" he exclaimed. "And he was your father! He was a much wronged man, and our august father was misled so much by false statements as to confiscate his estates, and banish him from Court. I recognise you now by my memory of him, and that is why your face seemed so familiar. Mr. Secretary, see that a patent be prepared for the new Count von Iderstein; that the forms to restore the family estates be began, and that a deed of gift of the seigniory of Berhoff, with the title annexed be made out. Count von Iderstein-Berhoff, we shall be always pleased to receive you."

When this was known, many were the congratulations of the courtiers, who were ready to welcome the rising man; but Peter was only anxious to convey the good news to the Lady Theela, and excused himself as soon as possible.

Of course, there was no lack of consent

now by the master of Mangelberg. In a short time there was a grand wedding, which was honoured by the presence of the Emperor himself, and the Princess of the blood imperial. There was also a guest unknown to the others—a little man, with a copper face, who was dressed in green velvet, and his tunic covered with jewels. At the close of the ceremony, this stranger advanced to the bride, and placed in her hands a necklace, bracelets and ear-rings, made up of the largest and most perfect emeralds that had ever been seen. While the ladies crowded around to examine them, the Gnome King stamped on the floor, which opened and closed over him, and neither Peter nor his guests ever saw him more.

XV.

The Turned Loaf.

ONCE upon a time King Easy reigned over Cocagne. His only son and heir-apparent, Prince Dauntless, was a young man of great personal beauty, and was skilled in arms and horsemanship. He was also considered learned for the times (for in those days princes and noblemen left letters to clerks), and could write fairly and read all kinds of manuscripts. The fame of so much beauty, skill and learning spread far and wide, and was heard of so far as the land of Thoule, in the north, and Prester John's country, in the east. Little was talked of at the surrounding Courts but the merits of this prodigy of beauty and knowledge, and the Queens around who had marriageable daughters were desirous of obtaining Prince Dauntless for a son-in-law. A travelling artist of great merit, having been

patronised by the royal family of Cocagne, was graciously permitted to retain for himself a copy of the portrait which he had made of the Prince. This he carried away to his home in Grimland, over which at that time reigned his Most Terrible Majesty, King Fiery. This portrait he presented to his patron, Count Simple, who held a highly responsible position at Court. The Count in turn presented the portrait to his wife, who showed it to her dear friend, the Countess Grissilissa, First Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess Royal. In this way it came that the Princess, whose name was Charming, had a sight of it, and straightway fell in love with the original. She therefore spoke to her mother, Queen Matrona, who in turn spoke to the King. The result of it was that King Fiery despatched an ambassador to the Court of Cocagne, proffering his daughter as consort to Prince Dauntless, with a promise, as there was no male heir, of the succession of the latter to the throne of Grimland. King Easy was very much pleased at the proposed alliance, for the territories of the two kingdoms lay side

by side, and their union would make a powerful realm. But the Prince, who seemed to become at once willful and whimsical, took an aversion to the lady whom he had never seen. As his father insisted on his obedience, and declared he must sacrifice his personal feelings to the good of the State, the Prince determined to avoid the marriage by flight. So he gathered together a sum of money sufficient for his needs, and, unknown to any in the palace, mounted his steed at nightfall and made his way out of the country.

The Prince, in order not to be known, assumed the name of Wanderman, and passed during his travels for a merchant. He made his way through many countries, seeing strange sights, and making himself acquainted with the manners and customs of the people. After he had passed a twelvemonth in this manner he found that he had very little money left, so he turned the head of his horse homeward, intending to return to his own country. On the way he met with three travellers, and, after the fashion of those who meet in their journeys, he stopped to exchange

news, and at last inquired about their success in Cocagne.

"There is no trade there since the war," said the elder of the three strangers. "The people are poor, for the land has been desolated, and troops of the enemy still occupy a great portion of the country, so that business is uncertain and neither the property nor life of the trader quite safe."

"You astonish me," said the Prince. "A year since the country was at peace."

"Very true," returned the other, "but you must know that about that time the heir-apparent of the kingdom left it secretly and has not since been heard of. Some say it was to avoid a marriage with Princess Charming, of Grimland. The father of the Princess believed that it was done by connivance of King Easy, and resented the slight by raising a large army, invading Cocagne, defeating the forces of Cocagne in a pitched battle, and overrunning the country. He drove the King out of his dominions and offered a reward for Prince Dauntless, whom he declares he will put to death."

"That makes it unpleasant for the young man," said the Prince, coolly; "but where is King Easy?"

"He has taken refuge in Lubberland, whose King has received him. He is still attached to his son, whom he believes to be in strange countries. He has abdicated in his favour, so that the latter will be King, provided he is alive and shall be able to conquer his kingdom."

"Which he could not do now," said the younger of the three travellers; "but if he have patience and skill he may yet raise an army, for he is beloved by the people, who hate the Grimlanders and would follow his banner."

The travellers then rode on, leaving the Prince to consider the state of affairs. Reflection convinced him that he could do nothing just then, but must wait for a more favourable time to strike a blow in defence of his rights. He at first thought of going to where his father had taken refuge, but concluded to place himself where he could best study the character and resources of the enemy. "The last place where I would be sought for," said

he to himself, "should be in Grimland itself. No one would expect to find me there, hence there is where I shall go." So he travelled in that direction, and on the way bought him a stout leather jerkin, which he donned, hiding his coat in a cavern in the forest. He cut off the long locks which it was the fashion for young gentlemen to wear, stained his skin brown, changed his bonnet for a steel cap, remounted his horse, and gave out wherever he went that he was a wandering man-at-arms, seeking service with some prince or lord.

On the morning of the second day after he had met with the travellers he arrived at a wood on the outskirts of Schwarzburg, the capital city of Grimland. Here he noticed a horse-path leading from the main road, and judging that it was a near way he entered it. He had not ridden far when he heard the screams of women, and he spurred his horse until he arrived at the place whence the sounds proceeded. There he beheld, in the hands of three ruffians, two ladies, one of whom was young and beautiful, and seemed to be of superior rank to her companion.

Drawing his sword and riding up to the group the Prince bade the freebooters to release their hold.

"Sir," said one of them, "go about your business or it will be a bad business for you. We came across these two damsels wandering here, and as they have jewels and gold chains, and we have no money, it is our purpose to relieve them of these, and do them no harm. This is our affair alone. So go your way, young man, or dread hard blows."

"Save me !" cried the younger of the ladies, breaking suddenly from the hold of the ruffian, and approaching Dauntless.

The Prince said nothing more but cut down the ruffian who had spoken at a single blow. Thereupon the other two attacked him vigourously, while the ladies fled. The Prince, who was a good swordsman, and had his horse perfectly under control, disarmed one of his antagonists and ran the other through the body. The disarmed man fled, and the Prince, not caring to pursue him, followed and soon overtook the ladies, who, on seeing him, stopped and awaited his coming.

The younger of the two ladies then said, "We thank you, Sir Man-at-arms, for your service, and would be glad should you escort us a short distance farther to the mansion which we incautiously left, and then retire. We strolled out in the forest unthinkingly, and would have paid dearly for my folly but for your coming."

Dauntless looked at the lady as she spoke, and she scanned him with furtive curiosity, mingled with a look of gratitude. She was young and beautiful, and clad as became a demoiselle of high degree. But what he most noticed was her golden hair, which, though bound together on her head by a fillet of pearls, fell behind her in long tresses far below her waist. He bowed when she had done speaking, and replied:

"I shall guard you, noble lady, whither you will, and retire when I shall have been assured that you are in safety. I am of gentle birth, though now but a simple man-at-arms, bearing the name of Wanderman, and you may trust to me."

"I trust you, gentle sir," said the lady blush-

ing, "and the more so because I know who you are, and that you are not what you seem."

This speech much astonished Dauntless, but he did not reply to it, and dismounting, walked with the ladies in silence until they came to the garden wall surrounding a stately palace. In this wall was a small gate, which the elder of the two opened with a silver key. The younger then turned to Dauntless, and said :

"If you seek the city, fair sir, you have mistaken the road. Retrace your path, and when you reach the highway keep to that. You may get in peril, being what you are and going where you aim. Take this ruby ring, and should evil befall you send it to the Lady of the Golden Ringlets and she may be able to afford you aid."

Saying which, with a smile, she followed after her attendant, and the gate was closed.

The Prince stood there for a few moments, and then, after placing the ring upon his finger, mounted. He wondered as he rode off who the lady might be and whether he should ever see her again, but followed her directions

and soon reached the high road he had previously left. Along this he went until he came to a wayside inn near the city gate, where he stopped and ordered breakfast, for he had eaten nothing since he rose at daybreak. In due time the landlord brought him a loaf of bread, a cold fowl and a flask of wine, with which the Prince refreshed himself, the host waiting upon him. Toward the close of the meal the Prince cut off an additional slice of bread, and returning the loaf to the plate inadvertently placed it upside down. No sooner had he done this than the landlord made a great outcry. At this the servants of the inn came rushing into the room, and beheld their master, with an expression of horror upon his face, pointing at the table. Comprehending the situation they threw themselves upon Dauntless, and by force of numbers bore him to the floor and bound him securely with cords.

So soon as he could recover his breath the Prince demanded the cause of this treatment.

"Unhappy young man," exclaimed the landlord, "you are sure to lose your life for this offence."

“What offence?” demanded Dauntless.

“Know, then, that many years since the king who then reigned over this country was killed by wicked men, and the signal for attack upon him was the turning of a loaf of bread upon the table by the chief of the conspirators. His successor, King Terrible the First, of blessed memory, enacted a law, which has never been repealed, that whoever was proven by the testimony of an eyewitness to have placed a loaf on a plate upside down should be tried by the chief-justice of the kingdom in the presence of the sovereign himself, and if convicted be at once put to death.”

“But,” said the Prince, “why trouble yourself about a thing that can do you no good. On the contrary, I have ample means——”

“What!” exclaimed the landlord, “would you bribe an old soldier because necessity has made him keep an inn? Away with him to prison!”

And so prompt were they at this command that in less than an hour after he first sat down to table the Prince found himself in

prison, with the door of his dungeon locked and barred. There he lay in bonds and in melancholy plight, wondering what defence he could make to the charge against him. He knew that ignorance of the law would afford him no plea, and he could devise no mode of escape. At length he remembered of the ring given him by the lady in the forest, and hoped to find some mode of sending it to her and apprising her of his danger. Just then a turnkey came, opened the door of his cell and unloosened his bonds. Having done this he was about to go, when Dauntless thought he knew him.

"Stay, my man," said he, "is your name Tricksir?"

The turnkey started, looked confused, and then replied: "My name is Gruff."

"That is odd, too," responded the Prince, "for you look exactly like one who, five years since, was condemned to die in my country, but whose life was spared at my request, on condition he would leave for foreign parts."

The turnkey, upon this, gazed in the face of the Prince and knew him. He threw him-

self upon his knees and kissed the hand of Dauntless.

"Ah! your Highness!" he cried. "My benefactor! How can I serve you with life or limb?"

"Do not know me longer as a Prince. I am here called Wanderman. Aid me to escape from this prison."

"Alas! that is impossible! I have only the keys of these cells, but not those of the great door. If we had only a week I might compass it, but to-morrow they try you, and then——"

"All is not lost until the end comes; you can serve me, nevertheless. Do you know where to find the Lady of the Golden Ringlets?"

"Every one knows where to find her."

"Take this ring, seek her at once, give it to her, and say that he who saved her is here and needs aid. Go!"

"At once, your Highness"; and he departed, closing the door after him, before the Prince had bethought him to ask about the lady whom every one knew.

All that day long Dauntless waited in vain

for an answer to his message. The turnkey did not return, and another took his place, who served him in silence. At nightfall, however, the warden of the prison made his rounds, and the Prince saw that Gruff was in his train. The turnkey lingered behind, and whispered through the grated door that the Lady of the Golden Ringlets would be there on the morrow at daybreak. Whereat the Prince was much rejoiced, for whether she could aid him or not he would at least gaze once more on her beautiful features and hear again her silver-toned voice. So he lay there on his pallet thinking of her, and not on his own situation, and at length fell asleep to dream of her; and so wrapt was he in slumber that it was broad daylight when Gruff awakened him in the morning, and told him that the Lady of the Golden Ringlets was in the corridor waiting to confer with him.

When the lady came to the grated door she looked at him tenderly and pityingly and shed a tear at his condition. "Do you know," she said, "that you are in danger two ways—under the law, which may not be set aside

while an offence exists against it, and because you are what you are ; for I knew you at the first, though I had never seen you, and I would rather that you had served me than any other. But do as I tell you and you shall be delivered from your peril."

"Dear lady," said the Prince, "what you tell me to do that I shall do, and what you forbid me I shall forbear, not alone for my own safety, but since you tell me ; and if, as you think you do, you know me entirely for what I am, you know that my word will be kept sacred, both for my honour and for what I may yet be."

"Then listen to me well," said the lady. "You know the law, and that to put you in peril you must be convicted under the testimony of an eye-witness ; but there is a part of the law that you do not know. Before your trial you are entitled to have three demands granted. There are no limits to these demands, except the sovereignty of the King, your liberty before conviction, or your life after. Anything else you demand must be granted, for the King swore at his coronation

to fulfil the law as a whole and in all of its parts as long as it remains a law."

"Unfortunately," observed the Prince, "my liberty and life are two of the things I would most like to ask."

"Listen to me while I whisper to you the three things you must demand and the order in which they must be demanded."

Then she told him these :

At the first he started, but at the second he exclaimed : "And may I indeed ask that and have it granted?"

At which she blushed and said : "If you are content, I am content ; but, indeed, it is needed for your safety."

"And for my life," he cried, "for without that life were not worth having."

At this the lady blushed still deeper, and then she whispered the third demand, at which he laughed outright and took courage. Then she summoned her attendant, who was the same he had seen the day before, and after giving him her hand to kiss through the bars, departed.

At noonday a detachment of the Royal

Guard came to the prison and took Dauntless to the great audience hall of the King's palace, where King Fiery was seated on his throne, attended by his ministers of state, his judges, and the foreign envoys. The lower part of the hall was crowded by all who could gain admittance, and among these was the landlord who was to give evidence against the accused.

Prince Dauntless was placed at the bar, and a herald demanded his name and station.

"I am known here as Wanderman," was the reply, "and I am a man-at-arms, skilled with sword and lance, seeking employment."

"Prepare then, O Wanderman, man-at-arms, to answer the charge against you."

"Stay yet awhile!" cried the Prince. "I claim my right, under the law of King Terrible, and I demand three things to be granted to me before the trial can lawfully proceed."

"Is that the law?" inquired the King of the judges. And they replied that it was, always the three things excepted, which have been before stated. "Then," said the King, "let the prisoner make his demands and they shall be granted one and all."

"I demand first," said the Prince, "that Prince Dauntless, in whose favour King Easy has abdicated, shall be at once publicly acknowledged as the independent sovereign of Cocagne."

King Fiery was at first very angry at this, but he was obliged to keep his word, so he granted the demand.

Thereupon the herald stood forth and proclaimed that King Fiery, for himself and successors, renounced all claim upon the kingdom of Cocagne, in favour of King Dauntless, whom he acknowledged as its independent sovereign.

"I demand, secondly, for myself," said the Prince, "the hand of the Lady of the Golden Ringlets in marriage."

King Fiery was still more angry. "Why, that," he said, "is our daughter, the Princess Charming!"

"Nevertheless, though I knew not that," returned the Prince, "I persist in my demand."

Finding that he could not induce the prisoner to ask otherwise, the King consented,

but said, "I give my consent, but I cannot force her inclinations. Should she say 'Yes,' it shall be so; but if she refuse I have no power, and you must make another demand instead."

So the Princess was sent for, and to the King's chagrin she appeared clad as a bride, and attended by a dozen young ladies, the noblest in the realm, and signified her assent. There being no help for it, they were at once married by the Archbishop, according to the form in use at that time in the kingdom.

"I am curious to learn," observed the monarch, "if the third demand can surpass the others in audacity."

"My third is very simple," said the Prince. "I demand that every witness who shall declare that he saw me turn the loaf shall have his eyes put out immediately after he has given his evidence."

"Oh, by all means," cried the King. "Herald, make proclamation."

But after the Herald had proclaimed the decree and the trial went on, a difficulty arose. The landlord's memory was utterly lost. He

could not remember that he saw the prisoner turn the loaf ; he could not quite remember if the loaf had been turned or not. At every question he would feel his eyes and could remember nothing. So the judges, after conferring together, concluded that nothing had been proven and acquitted the prisoner.

“But,” exclaimed King Fiery, maliciously, “stay ! The law has still another hold on you. There is a statute of this kingdom which provides that whoever, not being a king or a king’s son, shall by any device obtain the hand of the King’s daughter in marriage, he shall die on his wedding-day.”

“The law concerns not me,” replied the Prince. “I am not only a king’s son but a king, though of but ten minutes’ creation. Here is the Queen Charming, consort to King Dauntless of Cocagne, and the royal pair crave your fatherly blessing.”

The two threw themselves before King Fiery, who looked at them in amazement and chagrin, but at last recovered his composure.

“Rise,” he said. “King Dauntless, you have outwitted me so dexterously that I

augur great things of your future. You will become a great sovereign. But I have no more conquered kingdoms to resign, and no more daughters to give. Besides, I must prevent such things in the future or I shall have all sorts of young men turning over all sorts of loaves and making all sorts of requests. Herald, make proclamation that the Law of the Turned Loaf is forever repealed, and that henceforth our loyal subjects may turn their loaves upside down with impunity, always provided they have loaves to turn."

Which the Herald did.

King Dauntless and Queen Charming took possession of Cocagne, and on the death of King Fiery succeeded to Grimland also, and they reigned happily over both countries for many years.

XVI.

The Grey Wizard.

ONCE upon a time there lived in a half-ruined mansion in Nomansland, a poor old knight, Sir Cedric, who had an only son, named Halbert. Sir Cedric was so poor that he had but one servant, an old man, who served him partly for love and partly for shelter, since wages he got none. One day, shortly after Halbert had risen to manhood, his father thus addressed him :

“ My son, you are now one-and-twenty years of age, stout, strong, of tried courage and good address. I have taught you how to use horse, hawk, sword and lance. You even know more than I, for the monks of the Abbey have taught you how to read and write, while I was bred a soldier, and not a clerk. It is time that you went forth to seek your fortune, which you may find in the wars,

or elsewhere, as God pleases. I give you the younger of our two horses, my sword, and a suit of chain armour, and with them a purse filled with broad pieces, which I have pinched us all for many years to save for this occasion. With these go forth, serve God, honour the King, and respect yourself. Here also are three gifts which were bestowed on me by the hermit who died last year in the cave in our woodland. He said, that properly used, they would make your fortune. Take them, with my blessing."

"It shall be as you command, beau sire, my father," replied Halbert. "But please to inform me what are the qualities of these things; for they seem to be but a slender silken scarf, a half-worn brown cap, and a plain, short staff of wood."

"The hermit told me," said Sir Cedric, "that the scarf, on which you see embroidered the word 'Knowledge,' not only confers upon its owner the power to see what is hidden from the sight of most men, but secures past all power of resistance whomever it may bind; that the cap, which has the word 'Prudence'

upon its rim, enables its possessor to avoid dangers into which he might fall, and that the staff, which has the word 'Energy' upon it, will beat down any weapon opposed to it, and make its holder able to cope with countless numbers. There were two other things, the belt of 'Firm Will,' which gave enormous strength, and the shoes of 'Thought,' by which the wearer was able to travel miles in a minute; but these had been stolen from the hermit by some knave to whom he gave shelter. I have never tested the others; but you have now the power to determine if the hermit's words be true or false."

The next morning at sunrise, Halbert, after a farewell kiss from his mother, bade his parents good-bye, and set forth upon his journey. It was a warm day in Spring, the air was filled with the scent of flowers, the sun shone brightly, and as the young man rode along, his heart was thrilled with hope and expectancy. At noonday he looked around for some place where he might obtain food, but finding none, at length stopped at a clear spring which bubbled from beneath the roots

of a huge tree. Here he ate some bread which he drew from the scrip fastened at his saddle-bow, and with a draught from the spring, made a meal which appeased his hunger. This done, he remounted ; but scarcely had he seated himself in the saddle, when he heard deep in the wood and at some distance, the clashing of swords, and at once rode straight to the sound.

He found a gentleman, richly clad, but without armour, standing against a rock, defending himself with his sword against three masked men-at-arms. At sight of Halbert, the combatants paused for a moment, and then two of the men-at-arms assailed the newcomer so suddenly and vehemently that he had no time to draw his sword. He struck at them, however, with his staff, which beat down their swords, and with another blow he stretched both on the ground, bleeding and senseless. He who had been in such peril before, took new heart, resumed a vigorous attack, and ran the remaining man-at-arms through the body. Halbert dismounted, and speedily tied the hands of the stunned knaves

together with his scarf, and though these soon recovered their senses, they found it impossible to break their bonds.

“You came in time, fair young sir,” said the assailed, “and have done me good service. I but strolled a short distance from the castle, unattended, when the assassins set on me, and kept me so busy that I had no time to wind my horn for aid.”

With that he blew three piercing blasts, on his horn, and in a brief time these were answered by a single blast deep in the wood. Presently a number of knights and esquires rode up, and some of them unmasked the ruffians, dead and alive, and others, after returning the scarf to Halbert, rebound the living offenders securely. One of the knights dismounted, and gave his horse to the rescued man, who mounted thereon, and bade Halbert ride by his side.

“I am Ethelred, King of Nomansland,” said he. “I do not recognise the knaves you overthrew, who are doubtless hired assassins; but the one I slew was the Baron Ronald, whom I dismissed from his office of Lord

High Steward for robbery. But for your help he would have had his revenge. That staff of yours was well wielded. But what I most admire is that a scarf so slender should have bound such strong arms so securely."

The King then inquired of Halbert his name and degree, and when he learned whose son he was, declared that he remembered Sir Cedric as a knight good and valiant at the court of Ethelwolf, when he, the King, was a boy. He said also that he would attach Halbert to his person, and promote him according to his deserts; and thus discoursing, they entered the castle. Here the lords and ladies learned of the exploit of the young man, who, being handsome and modest withal, was treated with favour by the Queen and Court; though some of the courtiers were disposed to look unkindly on him as an adventurer who bade fair to become a favourite, and so might interfere with their designs.

Among others then at Court was the Lord Caradoc, whose son had been slain in the wars, having an only daughter, the Lady Is-aula, who was a maid of honour to the Queen,

and was exceedingly beautiful. Nevertheless, the demoiselle was not much sought after by the gallants of the Court since her grandsire had been impoverished by the Grey Wizard, who was the terror of the country, and whom neither the King nor all his nobles had been able to subdue. No sooner had Sir Halbert, for the King had knighted him on their return, beheld the Lady Isaula, than he fell violently in love with her; and though she, being modest and prudent, concealed her feelings as much as she might, it was easily to be seen that she was pleased at the homage of her new admirer.

Sir Halbert one day enquired of the seneschal of the castle, what manner of man was this Grey Wizard, who had wrought so much mischief, and whom it seemed so difficult to overcome.

“Fair Sir Knight,” said the seneschal, “I am only able to tell what I hear. Some believe him to be a goblin, who defies mortal foes, because of his nature; but others think him to be a mortal, who gains his power by unlawful arts. And it is averred that he has

the belt of Firm Will, which confers on its wearer enormous strength ; and the shoes of Thought, which give him wonderful swiftness. This much is certain. He seizes and carries away what he will, as though it were a feather ; and he comes and goes with the swiftness of lightning. It is useless to follow him, he can not be overtaken ; and, it is said, that when he comes to the cliffs where his den is, that he melts into the rock and disappears, though no one can trace any spot of entrance. He not only carries off valuable things, but men and women, whom he holds to ransom."

"How is the ransom paid, and how much?" demanded Sir Halbert.

"There is no fixed sum. Those who desire one released, must leave an amount of gold, according to the degree of the captive, upon a flat stone in front of the rock. No one complains of his treatment under duress—only to the captivity. All concur in saying that the subterranean abode is one of untold delights, and, strange to say, they have daylight there, and blue skies, and perpetual Summer, which, as the place is in the heart of

the rock, must be through the magic of the Wizard."

"But why does he so much annoy Lord Caradoc?"

"They say it is because when the Wizard first began to play his pranks, and carried off a rich miller who had a mill on my lord's estate, that Lord Caradoc forbade them to pay ransom, and called out a force to catch and hang the offender. From that time forth the Wizard began to avenge himself. He carried away so many of the tenants and retainers of Lord Caradoc, that no man would hold land, and no one serve that lord; and so the lands have fallen to waste, and yield no revenue. Recently the Wizard took his lordship's hawk and hound and horse, and says he will carry off first his granddaughter, and next Lord Caradoc himself. That is why the Lady Isaula is always attended by a strong guard when she goes abroad."

On all this Sir Halbert seriously pondered, but think as he might, could form no plan by which he might avert the danger to the Lady Isaula.

One day, however, he rode forth to view the Wizard's stronghold. He had on him the cap of Prudence, was girt with the scarf of Knowledge, and bore the staff of Energy, for without these he never went abroad. He gazed at the cliffs, which he found to be a mass of barren rock, of an oblong form, extending either way for nearly a mile, and rising three hundred feet or more in the air, from a deep thicket. Three of the sides were perpendicular, and the fourth, with numerous projections and recesses, overhung its base. The summit seemed to be inaccessible. At one spot he saw a flat stone, whereon he supposed the ransom money was laid, and near it was a deep recess, partly hidden by a column of rock. There was no aperture apparently, but as he peered into the place, such was the virtue of the scarf that he saw the traces of a door of rock ; but, try as he might, he could discover no mode of opening this. After a little while he turned to go homeward, and went to a spot in the thicket where he had tethered his horse. He was about to mount when he heard a jarring noise, and, on peer-

ing through a rift in the branches he saw, emerging from behind the column he had just left, an old man clad in grey, who was of small stature, thickly set, and with a face of sinister expression. This he rightly conjectured to be the Wizard, and was about to sally forth and attack him, when the old man bounded forward, and in an instant was out of sight.

Sir Halbert feared that the Wizard was about to carry out his threat concerning the Lady Isaula, and determined to intercept him on his return, and rescue her. So he went to the recess, and taking his scarf in one hand, and his staff in the other, hid himself behind the column. He had not long to wait. Presently, there was a whirring sound, as of the wings of some great bird, and the Wizard, bearing the Lady Isaula, who had fainted with terror, in his arms, plunged into the recess. The miscreant espied Sir Halbert, and dropping the lady on the ground, sprang at the young Knight, who, avoiding his grasp, dealt him a blow upon the head which stretched him there, senseless and bleeding. To tie the Wizard's



"THE WIZARD, BEARING THE LADY ISAULA IN HIS ARMS, PLUNGED
INTO THE RECESS."

arms with his scarf, and then to strip the robber of his belt and shoes, and place these on his own person, was the work of a minute or so, and then Sir Halbert addressed himself to recovering the lady from her swoon. When she recovered, and discovered that she had been rescued, and by whom, her eyes expressed her gratitude and a tenderer feeling and the modest glance caused the heart of her lover to beat with joy.

As they stood there, with no word spoken, but all love and tenderness filling their minds, they heard the clatter of coming horse-hoofs, and knew that a pursuing party was rapidly approaching. In a short while the King and the nobles and knights of his Court rode up. Lord Caradoc embraced his granddaughter, and thanked Sir Halbert, whom the rest congratulated on his success. The Wizard, who had recovered, and whom the party rebound, restoring the scarf to its owner, now spoke. He reminded them that the interior of the rock was not accessible, save through him, and offered to release the captives therein if his life was spared and his liberty given, but

not otherwise. To this proposition the King was averse ; but there seemed no other way, and the Wizard chuckled over his expected liberation. Sir Halbert craved that they would wait awhile, and proceeded to more narrowly inspect the fissures which he believed marked a rocky door. Presently he saw a small projecting fragment of rock, and pressing it, it moved a spring, and the door fell back on its hinges. A long passage was revealed, into which Sir Halbert, followed by a number of the younger knights, entered. It soon led them to the interior, and there they found an open space, surrounded by a huge rocky wall, of varying thickness. Here was an arid spot, and a few mean huts, which, by the magic of the Wizard, were made to seem to his captives to be a beautiful garden and magnificent palaces. A number of prisoners came to meet and thank their rescuers. The retainers of the Wizard poured forth and commenced a furious attack on the intruders ; but the staff of Sir Halbert did its office, and they were beaten down one after the other, and secured by the men-at-arms, who had ar-

rived and entered the place. They were speedily followed by the King and the rest, Lord Caradoc and the Lady Isaula having been sent back under a guard.

The Wizard was speedily condemned and justly punished for his crimes, and the rock, and the treasures which the Wizard had accumulated, were given to Sir Halbert ; and sufficient territory around the rock was added by the King to make it a large estate sufficient for his rank, for he was created Lord Rendcliff, and made Lord High Steward. But though the young man received the land and the title with all gratefulness, he would not retain treasure which was ill-gotten. So he caused the money to be returned to those who had paid ransom, and all stolen goods to be restored ; and as there was still some coin left in the Wizard's coffers, he distributed that among the poor. What became of the five wonderful things he had I know not, but the chronicles of Nomansland show how the new Lord Rendcliff sent for his parents to share his good fortune, and how he married the Lady Isaula, and on the death of her grand-

father, succeeded in her right to the title and lands of Lord Caradoc, and how in a war which broke out shortly after, he won renown for his feats of arms, and how he lived with his wife long and happily.

XVII.

Runphast.

ONCE upon a time, when Topsyturvy was king of the Antipodeans, and Upsidedown was his prime minister, there lived a young man at the capital city of Bottomupp whose name was Runphast. Although born and bred in the place, some of his habits were different from those of the people around him. Other people there bought all their views and feelings ready-made from Red Tape, who was opinion-maker to the Royal Family, and who furnished correct notions upon all subjects at so much per yard, all warranted of an orthodox pattern, and sufficient to wear a life-time. Runphast happened one day accidentally to make an opinion, while he was engaged on something else, and was so tickled at it, that he began to make all his opinions for himself, to the inconvenience of monopoly, and the

horror of his betters. From opinions, he went to deeds, and began to do what no one else did, and not to act as other people acted. For one day he actually discovered that he could not only run with his feet, but so swiftly as to leave the fleetest greyhound behind him. He at once took advantage of this gift, and even did more. While every one else walked about head downwards, and with his legs in the air, Runphast persisted in using his feet to walk with, and in going about his business with his head uppermost. He carried this singularity farther. He wore shoes on his feet instead of his hands, and in lieu of carrying his hat after the fashion of an Antipodean, placed it on his head, to the great scandal of all good citizens, and to the manifest injury of public morals. No remonstrance availed with him. His good old mother implored him to walk upon his hands like other people, and not to break her heart by conduct which bordered on lunacy. His tender father gave him two or three sound floggings for his indecorous behaviour, to which corrections he submitted since he could not avoid them, but

persisted in his wicked ways. He was laughed at by the grown people, while the little boys, filled with as much zeal for good manners as their seniors, followed him in crowds through the street, whooping and yelling at his heels. Ridicule had no more effect than entreaty and the rod. He still walked with his legs, and held his head erect in the air.

At length he was summoned before the authorities, who informed him that he must not defy public sentiment, and violate the time-honoured customs of the realm. The mayor of the town, who was a gentleman with an air of authority and a red nose, told him plainly that he must reform, or leave the country, under penalty of being locked up in the Turnoverdale Lunatic Asylum. He took his Worship at his word, shouldered his knapsack, and set out on his travels in search of a country where people used their feet to walk with, and kept their brains free from superfluous blood by elevating the head above the other parts of the body.

It was two days before Runphast came to the boundary of Antipodea, attended on his

journey by the hooting and pelting of the polite populace, who sent him their parting compliments of stones and curses as he passed over the line. Here he entered upon a bare and stony desert, which it took him a day, swift as he was, to cross. By nightfall, he came to a pleasant stream, beyond which, at the distance of a few miles, he could see the turreted walls and glittering roofs of a large city. Near him was a low hut at the side of the stream, to which he proceeded in search of food and shelter. As he was about to enter, he stumbled and nearly fell against something, and on looking down saw it was the body of a man who was crawling apparently on all fours.

“What do you mean?” growled this person, “by trying to mount over a man at his own door-step?”

Runphast apologised by saying that he had not observed him.

“If you had been going about like other people,” said the other, “instead of hopping like a kangaroo, you wouldn’t have disturbed me. What do you want?”

“I would like to obtain something to eat, and a place to sleep,” replied Runphast.

“Hospitality is the first of the virtues—enter, and repose yourself.”

Runphast made his way with some difficulty through the door, which was only four feet high, into an apartment in which he could barely stand upright. There were no chairs in the room, but there were an abundance of long, narrow cushions, on one of which he seated himself, his companion prostrating his form on his hands and knees upon another.

“Pray, sir,” enquired Runphast, after a pause, “can you tell me two things—one, what is the name of the city we can see from the door, and the other, why you go about on all fours, instead of walking erect?”

“Certainly,” replied the other; “but first, what is your name?”

“Runphast.”

“Very good. Mine is Go Slo. The city is named Phoarpheet, and it is the capital of the great and enlightened country of Quadrupedia. I go this way because it is the proper mode of progression among all civilised

peoples, as it is among all the nobler animals. And now, let me ask you a question. Why do you, who have apparently as strong arms as need be, go about like a goose, without indeed the excuse of a goose, who can do no better."

Runphast was astonished at this question, and after a little pause of embarrassment, said—

"Really, I don't know——"

"I thought so," said the other, interrupting him. "Ignorance is as much the parent of bad habits as intention. However, before supper is served, let me give you a caution. In entering Phoarpheet, I would advise you not to continue the singularity you have begun. The people might possibly tolerate you as a harmless lunatic; but you might chance to come before his Gracious Majesty, our sublime Ruler, the great King Bah Boon himself, and if you were to rear yourself on one end then, after the queer way I saw you do to-night, he would punish you smartly for such a gross breach of etiquette."

Runphast thanked his host for his friendly

counsel, which he promised to observe, and Go Slo, crawling to a cupboard in the corner, brought out a plate containing biscuits, a ewer with milk, and two flat pans, which he filled from the ewer, and placed between his guest and himself. Runphast, on being asked to fall to, ate a biscuit, and then raised the pan to his lips, as he sat, and drained its contents.

Go Slo laughed immoderately, rolling over and over his cushion in a fit of mirth.

“I really beg your pardon,” he said, after he had somewhat recovered his gravity, “but to see you assume such a position got the better of my courtesy. Why don’t you lie flat on your belly as I do, and, in that graceful posture, resting yourself on your elbows, raise the pan thus”—and he suited the action to the words—“and quench your thirst like a gentleman?”

“You see,” he continued, “how natural as well as how elegant is the recumbent position for refreshment as well as repose. Thus, too, your food is easily digested. Fancy an animal taking its food with its forefeet as you had them, straining its stomach out of the

natural position. There is no horse but what might teach you this. Even a goose would not bring its back to the perpendicular as it swallowed its corn. Still, I do not reproach. I set it down to error in your training."

Runphast apologised for his breach of courtesy, and took the rest of his food after the fashion prescribed.

After supper the two, reposing upon their cushions, with backs up, and the forepart of each body resting upon the elbows, entered into conversation. Runphast, at the request of his entertainer, gave his history, and described the manners and customs of the Antipodeans.

"Really," observed Go Slo, when the story was over, "the world is peopled with singularly barbarous races. I thought your folly in walking upon your hind legs, to be singular and disagreeable; but when I think of men walking with their heads down, your conduct looks decorous through comparison. We have some people in a neighbouring realm—people partly civilised at that—who have as odd customs too, though different from yours;

so I can readily credit your story. However, you have come to a country where men have reached the highest point of civilisation, and you will learn much by observing what such people say and do."

They soon retired to rest, and Runphast slept soundly till morning, when, after breakfast, they both started for the city of Phoarpheet, the host kindly lending his guest a pair of hand-shoes to wear on the occasion. Of course their mode of progress was after the prevailing fashion, so that Runphast, when they entered the city, found himself exceedingly fatigued.

It appeared that it was a feast-day, and all Phoarpheet was in commotion. It was the birthday of the lovely princess Mun Kee, the only daughter of King Bah Boon, who was in a month's time to be married to the venerable monarch Rangatang, who swayed the potent sceptre of Simialand. As her royal father and mother were about to lose her, they all at once became very fond of her, and instead of averring that she was the plague of their life, as they had hitherto done, got up all sorts

of entertainments for her delight, and to enhance her value in the eyes of her bridegroom. The air was noisy with the clanging of bells and the booming of cannon, flags fluttered from spire, pinnacle and balcony, and great crowds hurried from all sides to the public square, where a large stage was erected for the Royal Family, before whom all kinds of mountebanks were to give exhibitions of their skill. With the rest of the crowd were Runphast and Go Slo, eager to secure a good place, which at last they obtained in the very front row of wooden benches that had been erected for the common peoples' use.

In a short while the sound of trumpets was heard, and then the King, on his hands and knees, came forward, leading the Princess, also in the same position, and followed by the Queen. When these had reposed themselves upon their cushions of purple velvet, the sports began.

Runphast was very much interested at what he saw, especially as every performer, so soon as he had gone through his tumblings, contortions, or whatever was his special line,

invariably brought himself back to his old position of allfours. One tough and springy little fellow, who twisted himself into all conceivable shapes, especially attracted our hero's attention, and eager to see him better, Runphast raised himself at length and leaned forward. At this there was a great commotion, followed by hisses and groans. Runphast looked around to discover the cause of the uproar, which kept increasing until it awoke the attention of the King.

The Princess Mun Kee observed it.

"La, sire!" said she to her royal father, and as she spoke, she blushed and hid her head behind her fan, "if there isn't a man standing on his hind legs. He quite makes me ashamed."

"What!" cried the King, in a voice of thunder, "in our very presence. Guards, drag that scoundrel here!"

In an instant Runphast was seized by a dozen of loyal hands, and thrust at the foot of the royal balcony.

"What does this audacious conduct mean?" inquired the King. "Why do you stand on your hind legs before the world?"

"If it please your Majesty," said Runphast, "I stand so because it is the proper position for a man?"

"A traitor!" shouted one part of the audience.

"A madman!" exclaimed another.

"Why, so he may be," said the King. "Justice forbid that we should hold a lunatic to a strict responsibility. Let our leading physicians inquire at once into the soundness of his mind."

Thereupon, twenty-four learned members of the faculty of physic advanced upon Runphast. Some of them felt his pulse and examined his tongue; others pounded him on the chest; a portion applied one end of a tube to his body and the other ends to their ears; a few examined the pores of his skin with magnifying glasses; and others again opened his mouth and inspected his throat by means of looking-glasses. After a time, they gave their opinions on his case—twelve of them declaring that his mind was sound enough, though he was devoid of judgment, and twelve averring that he was as mad as a March

hare—a hare in that country always being afflicted with lunacy in that part of the year lying between the last day of February and the first day of April.

The King was rather puzzled at first with this difficulty ; but he got rid of it in a rather royal way.

“If he be a traitor he is of no use to the realm,” said he ; “and if a madman, of no use to himself. In either case, we had better get rid of him. Tie him to a horse’s back, in the position he seems to court, and drive him outside of the kingdom.”

So they set Runphast on a horse, with his feet tied beneath its belly, and with shouts, and blowing of trumpets, and clanging of bells, and booming of cannons, started him on his journey. The affrighted beast gave a jump and set out on such a gallop that in a few minutes he was at the desert again, over which he ran furiously, though in a different direction from which the rider had come. The beast kept on his course until nightfall, when he came to a stop from sheer fatigue, just on the edge of a fertile country. Run-

phast barely managed to reach down and cut the thongs that fastened his feet, when the horse reeled and fell. Runphast threw his feet upwards and came to the ground with little hurt, on one side, as the fatigued animal rolled over on the other.

Runphast arose to his feet, and looked around him. He saw a light at a distance—the sun having just set—and made toward it. It proceeded from the window of a mansion, situated in the centre of what appeared to be a flower garden. He entered an enclosure by a wide gate, which gave way as he pushed it, and when he had passed, closed after him. Proceeding up a finely gravelled path, he soon arrived at the great door of a large and apparently stately palace, at which he knocked. The door was opened by a servant, who demanded his name and business.

Now Runphast reflected a moment, and as modest bearing and a quiet demeanour had gained him nothing as yet, decided on trying the effect of a little arrogance and assumption. So he said,

“Whose dwelling is this?”

“It is the country mansion of the Lord Whirligig, who is here to entertain some guests, and is now at the banquet.”

“Inform him that the Marquis Runphast of Antipodea, Count of Naccount, Baron of Spondulicks, and Lord Nozoo, on his travels, has been thrown from his horse near his grounds, and requests repose and refreshment.”

The servant bowed, showed him a seat in a side chamber and then turned heels overhead by a succession of somersaults, reached a door at the head of the apartment, through which he disappeared.

“Certainly,” said Runphast to himself, “that fellow is what half the doctors of Quadrupedia pronounced me to be.”

He had no time to reflect farther ; since in an instant the servant returned, in the same way he came, and said—

“I have orders to conduct your Lordship to the presence of my noble master.”

And performing the same gymnastic feats as before, he conducted him to the great door, which he threw open, announcing in a loud voice—

"The high born and mighty nobleman, my Lord Marquis Runphast."

The apartment into which Runphast was so ceremoniously ushered, was lofty, and elegant in its structure and appointments. At the head of a banqueting table, with two guests on one side and three on the other, sat a venerable person in a snowy beard and long white locks, who rose as he entered, and with an agility that would have done credit to a professional acrobat, turned a couple of somersaults, and alighted on his feet just before Runphast.

"Permit me," said this venerable person, "to welcome you, my Lord Marquis, to my mansion, and to beg of you to occupy the vacant seat at my table. I have already sent servants in pursuit of your runaway steed."

With that he led him to the table, and introduced him to the remainder of the friends. Each of these, as his name was pronounced, turned a back somersault over his chair, and then a forward one back to his seat in a manner eminently graceful.

The moment after, supper was served.

Every attention was paid to Runphast, and during the progress of the meal, the Lord Whirligig made some polite inquiries about affairs in Antipodea, which Runphast answered.

At length, after the cloth had been removed and the wine was on the table, Runphast ventured to inquire why the servants, instead of walking out of the room, or in, turned themselves over and over in such a curious way, to the great peril of the dishes they bore.

"Such, my Lord Marquis," answered his host, "is the custom of the realm, which has prevailed for many years, and is not likely to be ever changed."

"May I inquire if there were any particular reason for it at the beginning?" inquired Runphast.

"Certainly," said the other. "Many centuries ago this realm was infested by place-hunters—people who desired to hold office at the hands of the sovereign. They instituted a sort of game they called politics, and to be perfect in this, it was necessary that every one

engaged in it should be able to suddenly put his heels over his head at a particular stage of the game. By great labour this singular class of people were rooted out. King Overanover the Twenty-first gave it the finishing stroke by ordaining that no office-holder should receive a salary, and that all official stealing should be done by members of the Royal Family. He also issued a decree that the turning of somersaults should be general, and no longer confined to a particular class. Since that time no one is allowed to go around in any other way, although the rigour of this rule is relaxed in favour of distinguished strangers like yourself, who, it is considered, have not had an opportunity to acquire the polite art of flip-flapping to perfection."

"But do you not find all this kind of thing fatiguing?"

"Not more, I fancy, than your mode of getting along. Habit and practice make anything easy; and, if not, fatigue is a small price to pay for a motion that is both elegant and vigorous—a mode of progression gratifying to the eye, and according to the canons of

a perfect taste—something that is inexpressibly dear to the lover of the picturesque and beautiful; and in good taste, and a love of the picturesque and beautiful, we flatter ourselves that no country can compare to the land of the Flip-flaps.”

To all of which Runphast replied by a bow, having no other reply to make.

Supper over, and the revel of the evening being closed, a servant with a candle in each hand, who turned over and over without extinguishing the lights, ushered him to his sleeping chamber, where he soon fell asleep.

In the morning, he met his host at the breakfast table. There, after exchanging the customary compliments of the morning, the Lord Whirligig said :

“As I told you last night, my Lord Marquis, the rigour of the rule which forces every one to throw his heels over his head is relaxed in favour of distinguished strangers. But some knowledge of the polite art of flip-flapping is indispensable, if one desires to enter society, and associate with well-bred men. I shall, therefore, lend you my valet, who is as

accomplished in this desirable art as his betters. A course of lessons from him will soon enable you to turn and fall on your feet, either at the place you started from, or as far forward as you desire."

Of course, Runphast acknowledged the favour, and accepted the considerate offer with thanks. He set himself at work, and under the guidance of the learned lacquey, he was soon enabled to throw somersaults backwards and forwards with a commendable degree of elegance and precision. So soon as this was announced to Lord Whirligig, and he was satisfied by his own eyes of the fact, he congratulated his guest upon his acquisition, and proposed at once to present him at Court.

Arrayed in a court suit, which consisted of a jacket—all tail coats interfering with the polite art of flip-flapping, and being held to be a sinful waste of cloth in their skirts—a laced waistcoat and knee-breeches, our hero and his noble friend made their way to the royal palace. From the carriage, as they were slowly drawn along, Runphast beheld the street full of foot-passengers, who turned over

and over, either with great speed—these were people hurrying along on business, or with slowness and deliberation—those were persons who were taking a promenade for the sake of the air. The scene was a novel one, and drew forth Runphast's admiration.

King Overanover the Ninety-fourth was a remarkably gracious monarch, and there was something in the air or manner of Runphast that impressed him favourably. So after presentation he said :

“I am delighted to welcome a nobleman so elegant and accomplished to my Court, and should be glad if I could induce him to become my subject, and enter my diplomatic service.”

Runphast bowed low, and tendered his services in any way that they could be made available by the king of the Flaps-flaps, who inclined his head in acknowledgment, and expressed in words and manner his gratification.

The next day the Marquis Runphast received letters as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of

Spinaround the First, King of the Tetotums, kissed hands upon his appointment, and as the occasion was urgent, set out immediately on his journey by post to the City of Weelabout.

Now, every traveller who has ever visited Weelabout, is perfectly aware of the peculiar custom of its inhabitants, and it is hardly necessary to tell my readers that the Tetotum people, instead of going head downwards, like the Antipodeans, or by ground tumbling, like the Flip-flaps, make their way through the world by each of them spinning on one leg, like a peg-top, or an opera-dancer. Indeed, when they meet they salute each other by standing on the left heel, and on that as a pivot, wheeling round and round, holding the right leg at right angles with the body, until they make three distinct revolutions.

Of course his Excellency, the new Flip-flap minister, in order to ingratiate himself with the people, and flatter the Court of Tetotum, span himself into the presence of King Spinaround, and pirouetted his way through the polite circles of the metropolis. So success-

ful was he in this, and so popular did he become, that nothing was soon talked of, or hardly thought of, but the ease, grace and courtly manners of his Excellency, the Marquis Runphast. The young bucks of the day sported Runphast coats, Runphast hats and Runphast neckties ; and his Excellency on one occasion having, by accident, put on an old blue coat which had been used as a travelling dress, and, by the combined influence of rain and sun, had changed its colour to a dingy grey, an enterprising manufacturer had a large amount of unsalable white silk dyed to match it, and under the name of Runphast grey, sold it all off among the ladies of fashion at such enormous prices that he was soon able to retire from business on a handsome fortune.

Nor was his Excellency less fortunate in his diplomatic business. Gifted by nature with a large amount of impudence, with an unparalleled cool assurance, and with the power of concealing his thoughts under vague phrases and unmeaning words, he was soon able to conclude a treaty which gave the Flip-flaps all the

essential points so long in dispute, and at the same time satisfied the statesmen of Tetotum that they had completely over-reached the dexterous and bland ambassador. Sometime after this triumph of his skill, just as he was congratulating himself that he had secured the perpetual favour of the monarch he served, he was thunderstruck by receiving letters of recall, borne by the hands of his successor, the Lord Whirligig.

His venerable friend] was profuse in his expression of sorrow at this unfortunate turn of affairs, and after he had been presented, and Runphast had had his audience of leave, explained the cause. It appeared that information had been received from Antipodea that Runphast was no marquis at all, but a mere adventurer, who had been forced to leave his country in consequence of having outraged her sentiments of propriety by bold and traitorous invasions of her time-honoured customs.

“In fact,” said Whirligig, “though I don’t believe a word of the slanders, you are in great personal danger. Our gracious sover-

eign is so much incensed at the double deceit he is convinced you practiced toward myself and him, that he has ordered me to demand your formal arrest as a state prisoner by the Tetotum monarch—a demand I shall have the honour to formally present to-morrow. You had better escape to-night, so soon as you have formally turned over to me the archives and funds of the embassy—especially the funds.”

Runphast thanked his successor in office, and at once acted on the advice, with the exception of that part relating to the funds. In the hurry of his departure he invested all the money of the legation in diamonds, and forgot to transfer these to his Excellency, Lord Whirligig, and take his receipt for them. He bought, on a credit of three months, the swiftest horse to be found, and mounting at night-fall, made his way to the desert in the direction of Antipodea, where he arrived after two days' hard journey.

He intended to enter his native land quietly enough, but was recognised, and to his great surprise greeted with loud hurrahs, and every

evidence of popular satisfaction and approval. To his greater surprise, he discovered that every one whom he saw walked upright, and no longer went about head down. His venerable father and mother, hearing of his arrival, came out and welcomed him home. The explanation was simple. A new monarch had succeeded to the throne, who was paralysed in his right arm. It was impossible for him to use his hands in lieu of feet. The result was that he was forced to walk with his head upwards. The Court followed his example, and the people followed the Court. A few conservative individuals maintained the old custom; but a royal decree forbidding the former practice under pain of death, they were obliged to yield—though it is believed they walked about every morning and evening head downwards in the privacy of their chambers. As the first innovator, and founder of the new order of things, Runphast was held in great honour. He was even, as an ex-ambassador, offered a high position of state.

But Runphast had seen the world, and had been taught prudence. He converted his

stolen diamonds into cash, lived in quiet ease on the proceeds of his rascality, and ever after swam with the tide. He never made any more opinions of his own ; but purchased all he desired to use from Red Tape, who still conducted the old business. His popularity was maintained unabated till his death ; when a pompous funeral and a lying tombstone rewarded the new found prudence and time-serving practice of one who originally bade fair to be bold, independent and unhappy ; but who happily changed his course.

THE END.

James

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